

ESSAYS
ON VARIOUS
SUBJECTS.

By the AUTHOR of
REFLECTIONS
ON THE
SEVEN DAYS of the WEEK.

VOL. I.

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SUBJECTS

THE SELECTION OF

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VOLUME I

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ESSAY I.

ONE scarce ever walked, with any Set of Company, by a neat Cottage, but somebody or other has expressed their Envy of the pastoral Inhabitant. It is quite common, among People of easy and affluent Circumstances, to imagine in a splentic Moment, every laborious Situation happier than their own: and to wish an exchange with the Plough-man, the Shepherd, or the Mechanic. I have sometimes thought this an Affectation: and a very false Sentiment it surely is. For if all made the Improvement, they ought of their own Way of Life, there can be little Doubt, but the higher, and more leisura-

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ble Stations would be, upon the whole, the happiest. That they rarely prove so in Fact, is the Fault of the Possessors : Who unable to avoid their necessary Cares, and unindustrious to seek out their true Advantages, sink under a Weight, that they might easily balance, so as not to feel it.

What is generally called the Spleen, is no other than the uneasy Consciousness and Dissatisfaction of a Mind formed for nobler Pursuits, and better Purposes, than it is ever put upon. Mere Pleasure is an End too unworthy for a rational Being to make its only Aim. Yet Persons, unconstrained by Necessity, are so apt to be allured by Indolence and Amusement, that their better Faculties are seldom exercised as they ought to be : Though every Employment that serves no other Purpose than merely to while away the present Moment, gives the Mind a painful Sensation, that whether distinctly attended to, or not, makes up, when frequently repeated, the Sum of that Satiety and

and Tediouſneſs ſo often lamented, in proſperous Life.

There is, doubtleſs, to many Perſons a real Difficulty in making the Choice of an Employment, when they are left perfectly at Liberty, to chuſe what they will. Neceſſity is perhaps the moſt ſatisfactory Guide: and for that Reaſon alone, the Artiſeer, the Shepherd and the Farmer, are happier than their affluent Neighbours. The poor Man muſt either work or ſtarve: ſo he makes the beſt of his Lot; works cheerfully, and enjoys the Fruit of his honeſt Labour. The Rich, the Eaſy, the Indolent, have a Taſk as neceſſary, but not ſo obvious. There is Room for ſome Doubt, and Uncertainty as to the Way of ſetting about it. A Life of ſublime Speculation is too high for the preſent State: A Life of ſoft Pleaſure is too low. The right Medium is a Life buſied in the Exerciſe of Duty: and Duties there are peculiar to every Situation, and an Enquiry into theſe is the leading one.

I was drawn into this Speculation by having indulged, last Summer, a whole Week of Idleness in a Visit, I made to an old Acquaintance in the Country. I, too, took it into my Head one Afternoon, to envy a poor Man, who was hard at Work for his Livelihood, mending the Roof of a Church, where he had some Danger, as well as Toil. I, who had been seeking out the coolest Shade, and reclining on the greenest Turf, amid the Fragrance of a thousand Flowers: I, who had Leisure to attend to the Warbling of Birds around me, or in Peace and Safety might amuse myself with the liveliest Wit and Eloquence of *Greece* and *Rome*—would have resigned all these Delights with Joy, to sit whistling at the Top of a high Ladder, suffering both Heat and Hunger.

After ruminating much on so odd a Phænomenon, I could find no better Way of accounting for it, than from the Preferableness of any allotted Employment, to an inactive Indulgence of selfish Pleasure,

sure. It would therefore be worth while for all of us, to consider what is our allotted Employment, and sitting down contented with that, all might be more than tolerably happy, and no such great Inequalities in the World, as are usually complained of.

Not that all Amusement and Indulgence should be severely banished. When properly and proportionably mixed with the more serious Purposes of Life, they become a Part of Duty. Rest and Relaxation are necessary to Health: The elegant Arts refine our Imaginations: and the most trifling Gaieties serve to cherish our good Humour and innocent Alacrity of Heart. The Enjoyment of proper Delights fills us with Gratitude to their all-bountiful Dispenser, and adds to the Bands of Society a flowery Chain of no small Strength, and does Justice to a fair World, that is full of them. The Number of them varies according to numberless Circumstances: but, in no Circumstance, are mere

Amusement and Relaxation to be considered as the Business of Life, or to be substituted for that real Task, which, in some Instance or other, is allotted to every State.

Let then the Shepherd enjoy his Peace, his Meadows, and his Oaten Pipe. Let the honest Artificer pursue his Trade with cheerful Industry, and rejoice that the Weight of States and Kingdoms does not lie upon his Shoulders. Let the Man of a middle Station know his Happiness, in possessing with quiet Obscurity, all the Comforts of Society and domestic Life, with Leisure, and Advantage for making the noblest Improvements of the Mind. Let the Rich and Great still look higher, and instead of repining at

“ Ceremony, the Idol Ceremony ! ”

which debars them of those free and humble Joys, delight themselves with their extensive Power of doing Good, and diffusing Happiness around them.

What

What an Alternative is put into the Choice of Man ! By Employment or Misuse of the Faculties assigned him, he may rise to what Dignity, or sink to what Baseness he will, in the Class of moral Beings. Human Existence is an inestimable Gem, capable of receiving whatever Polish we will please to give it : and if heightened with the Diligence it ought, will shine in due Time, with a Lustre more dazzling than the Stars.

It would not be fantastical (for its Foundation is in Truth and Reality) to form a Scale of Nobility very different from the common Distinctions of Birth, Titles, and Fortune ; and wholly according to that Figure, Persons make in the moral World, and according to their various Degrees of Improvement and Usefulness. The Change would not be total. Many, who are now high in Life, would continue so : but not a few would be strangely degraded.

Of what Account indeed, in the true System of Life is He (be he what he will in Greatness) who sleeps away his Being in indolent Amusement? Whose Hours hang heavy on his Hands, without the Gaming-Table, the Bottle, the Buffoon or the Taylor? And whose Mind amidst them all, is perpetually clouded with a splenetic Discontent, the inevitable Rust of unused Faculties? Uncomfortable to himself, and unimportant to his Fellow-Creatures, whatever were his Advantages of Nature and Fortune, he has degraded himself from them all. A Day-Labourer, who does his utmost at the Plough and the Cart, is a much more respectable Being.

In this Scale, the Miser's Plea of Poverty would be readily admitted, as witnessed by his anxious Look and sordid Life: While the frank Heart and open Countenance should be set down for the Merit of a Plum.

Even the Miser himself has a Class of Inferiors, and that, without speaking of the
the

E S S A Y I.

the downright Vicious, who come under another Kind of Consideration. These are the Oyster-Livers: Such as lose the very Use of their Limbs from mere Laziness, and waste Year after Year fixed to one uncomfortable Spot; where they eat and drink, sleep and grumble on: while the Duty of their Situation properly attended to, would make them happy in themselves, and a Happiness to others. Were the Pearl taken out of that unsightly Shell, what a Circulation of Riches and Ornaments might it make in Society! But while these poor Animals can fatten on their barren Rock, it matters not to them.

If Cowardice sinks Persons lower than all other Vices, beneath even these will come in the poor Slaves of false Shame, the mean Deserters of their Duty. How many, that now pass for Men of Honour and Spirits would appear more weak and timorous than Female Fear. Some not daring to refuse a Challenge: others drinking against

Inclination, or affronting Religion against their own Consciences: or prodigal of Health and Fortune, from merely wanting Strength to resist the vain Current of Fashion. No black Slave sold in a Market is so far from Liberty, as every one of these.

In numberless such Ways, does the bewildered Race of Man deviate from the Paths of Felicity and Glory, and childishly squander away inestimable Advantages. For just in Proportion to the Improvement of those Faculties, with which Heaven has intrusted us, our Beings are ennobled, and our Happiness heightened. The Enjoyments of a mere animal Existence are flat and low. The Comforts of plain ordinary Life, in those who have some Feelings of the Connexions of Society, but no Idea of any Thing higher, rise in the next Degree. The Pleasures of an improved Imagination take in a Circle vastly wider and more fair. The Joys of a benevolent Heart animated by an active diligent Spirit, refined Sentiments; and Affections justly warm,

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warm, exceed the most gay Imagination. The strong Sense, and genuine Love of Truth and Goodness, with all those noblest Dispositions, that fill a Mind affected and penetrated, as it ought to be, with a Sense of Religion, and practising every Part of Christian Duty, ascends still higher, and raises Humanity to that Point, from which it begins to claim a near Alliance with superior Natures.

B. C. E S S A Y

E S S A Y · II.

POLITENESS is the most agreeable Band of Society, and I cannot help attributing more ill Consequences to the general Disregard of it, than People, at present, are apt to attend to. Perhaps it may be so intirely laid aside, by the Time that this Manuscript comes into any Body's Hand, that the Page, which preserves some faint Outlines of its Resemblance, may be thought no unuseful one: or at least by the Lovers of Antiquity, may be read with Pleasure, as containing some curious Remains of an elegant Art: an Art, that humanized the World, for many Years, till the fine Spirits of the present Age, thought fit to throw it off, as a narrow Restraint, and a mean Prejudice of Education.

Politeness

Politeness is the just Medium between Form and Rudeness. It is the Consequence of a benevolent Nature, which shows itself, to general Acquaintance, in an obliging, unconstrained Civility, as it does, to more particular ones, in distinguished Acts of Kindness. This good Nature must be directed by a Justness of Sense, and a Quickness of Discernment, that knows how to use every Opportunity of exercising it, and to proportion the Instances of it, to every Character and Situation. It is a Restraint laid by Reason and Benevolence, upon every Irregularity of the Temper, which, in Obedience to them, is forced to accommodate itself even to the fantastic Laws, which Custom and Fashion have established, if, by that Means, it can procure, in any Degree, the Satisfaction, or good Opinion of any Part of Mankind. Thus paying an obliging Deference to their Judgment, so far as it is not inconsistent with the higher Obligations of Virtue and Religion.

This

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This must be accompanied with an Elegance of Taste, and a Delicacy observant of the least Trifles, which tend to please, or to oblige: and though its Foundation must be rooted in the Heart, it can scarce be perfected without a complete Knowledge of the World.

In Society, it is the Medium, that blends all different Tempers, into the most pleasing Harmony, while it imposes Silence on the Loquacious, and inclines the most Reserved to furnish their Share of the Conversation, it represses the Ambition of shining alone, and increases the Desire of being mutually agreeable. It takes off the Edge of Raillery, and gives Delicacy to Wit. It preserves a proper Subordination amongst all Ranks of People, and can reconcile a perfect Ease, with the most exact Propriety.

To Superiors it appears in a respectful Freedom: no Greatness can awe it into Servility,

Servility, and no Intimacy can sink it into a regardless Familiarity.

To Inferiors it shows itself in an unassuming good Nature. Its Aim is to raise Them to You, not to let You down to Them. It at once maintains the Dignity of your Station, and expresses the Goodness of your Heart,

To Equals it is every Thing, that is charming. It studies their Inclinations, prevents their Desires, attends to every little Exactness of Behaviour, and all the Time appears perfectly disengaged and careless.

Such, and so amiable is true Politeness, by People of wrong Heads and unworthy Hearts disgraced in its two Extremes; and, by the Generality of Mankind, confined within the narrow Bounds of mere good Breeding, which, in Truth, is only one Instance of it.

There

There is a Kind of Character, which does not in the least deserve to be reckoned polite, though it is exact in every Punctilio of Behaviour. Such as would not for the World omit paying you the Civility of a Bow, or fail in the least Circumstance of Decorum : But then these People do this so merely for their own Sake, that whether you are pleased, or embarrassed with it, is little of their Care. They have performed their own Parts, and are satisfied. One there is, who says more civil Things than half Mankind besides, and yet, is "So obliging that he never obliged." For while he is paying the highest court to some one Person of the Company, he must, of Course, neglect the rest, which is ill made up, by a forced Recollection at last, and some lame Civility, which, however it may be worded, does in Effect, express only this, "I protest I had quite forgot you : but as insignificant as you are, I must not, for my own Sake, let you go Home out of Humour." Thus every one in their Turn, finding his Civility to be

be just as variable as his Interest, no one thinks himself obliged to him for it.

This then is a Proof, that true Politeness, whose great End is giving real Pleasure, can have its Source only in a virtuous and benevolent Heart. Yet this is not all: it must observe Propriety too. There is a Character of perfect good Nature, that loves to have every Thing about it happy or merry. This is a Character greatly to be loved, but has little Claim to the Title of Politeness. Such Persons have no Notion of Freedom without Noise and Tumult: and by taking off every proper Restraint, and sinking themselves to the Level of their Companions, even lessen the Pleasure these would have in the Company of their Superiors.

Cleanthes too loved to have every Body about him pleased and easy. But in his Family, Freedom went Hand in Hand, with Order; while his Experience of the World, in an Age of more real Accomplishments,

plishments, preserved his whole Behaviour agreeable to his Company, and becoming his Station.

Certainly this Regard to the different Stations of Life, is too much neglected by all Ranks of People. A few Reflexions will show this but too plainly. That the Government of States and Kingdoms should be placed in a few Hands was, in the earliest Ages of the World found necessary to the well-being of Society. Power gave a Kind of Sanction to the Persons, in whose Hands it was vested; and when the People's Minds were awed into Obedience, there was the less Need of Punishments to restrain their Actions. Each various Rank of them viewed, with profound Respect that, which was most regularly beautiful: and the Pile of Government rose, in due Proportion, with Harmony in all its Parts.

Very different is the present Scene, where all Sorts of People put themselves upon a Level, where the meanest and most ignorant

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rant censure, without Reserve, the greatest and the wisest: where the sublimest Subjects are scanned without Reverence, the softest treated without Delicacy.

There was a Time, when from this Principle of Politeness, our Sex received a thousand delicate Distinctions, which made us as it were Amends for our Exclusion from the more shining and tumultuous Scenes of Life. Perhaps it is a good deal our own Fault, that within some Years, the Manner of treating us has been entirely altered. When the fine Lady becomes a Hoyden, no Wonder if the fine Gentleman behaves to her, like a Clown. When People go out of their own proper Character, it is like what silly Folks imagine about going out of the Conjuror's Circle: beyond those Limits you must expect no Mercy.

It would be endless to reckon up the various Errors on each Side of true Politeness, which form Humourists and Flatterers,

ers, Characters of blunt, or ceremonious. Impertinence. But that I may give as true a Standard of the Thing itself, as I am capable of doing, I will conclude my Paper with the Character of Cynthio, from whose Conversation and Behaviour I have possibly collected most of the Hints which form it.

“ Cynthio has added to his natural
“ Sense a thorough Knowledge of the
“ World : by which he has attained that
“ masterly Ease in Behaviour, and that
“ graceful Carelessness of Manner, that
“ no Body, I know, possesses in so high a
“ Degree. You may see, that his Polite-
“ ness flows from something superior to
“ the little Forms of Custom, from a hu-
“ mane and benevolent Heart directed by
“ a Judgment, that always seizes what is
“ just and proper; and formed into such an
“ habitual good Breeding, that no forced
“ Attention ever puts you in Mind, at the
“ Time, that Cynthio is taking Pains to
“ entertain you, though upon Recollec-
“ tion

“ tion you find him to be, for that very
“ Reason, a Man of the compleatest Po-
“ liteness.

“ His Conversation is always suited to
“ the Company he is in, yet so as never to
“ depart from the Propriety of his own
“ Character. As he is naturally indolent,
“ he is generally the least talkative of the
“ Set; but he makes up for this, by ex-
“ pressing more in a few Words, than the
“ Generality of People do in a great many
“ Sentences. He is formed indeed for
“ making Conversation agreeable; since
“ he has good Nature, which makes him
“ place every Thing that can have a Share
“ in it, in the most favourable Light that
“ it is capable of; and a Turn of Hu-
“ mour, that can put the most trifling
“ Subject in some amusing Point of View.

“ In a large Company, Cynthio was ne-
“ ver known to engross the whole Atten-
“ tion to some one favourite Subject, which
“ could suit with only a Part of it; or to
“ dictate,

“ dictate, even in a small one. With a very
 “ quick Discernment, to avoid speaking or
 “ thinking severely of the many Faults
 “ and Follies, this World abounds with,
 “ is a Proof of an excellent Temper too,
 “ which can be no Way constantly sup-
 “ ported, and made in its Effects, consist-
 “ ent with itself, but upon the Basis of
 “ serious Principles.

“ This then is the Support of Cynthia's
 “ Character, and this it is, that regulates
 “ his Actions, even where his natural In-
 “ clination would direct him differently.
 “ Thus, when the Welfare of the Public
 “ is concerned, he can assume a Strict-
 “ ness, that carries great Awe with it,
 “ and a Severity, that a mere constitutio-
 “ nal good Nature would be hurt by,
 “ though it answers the most valuable
 “ Ends of true Humanity. Thus his na-
 “ tural Indolence is allowed to show itself,
 “ only in Things of trifling Consequence,
 “ or such as he thinks so, because they
 “ regard only himself: but whenever he

“ has any Opportunity of serving a Friend,
 “ or doing a worthy Action, no Body is
 “ so ready, so vigilant, so active, so con-
 “ stant in the Pursuit; which is seldom
 “ unsuccessful, because he has a useful
 “ good Sense, that directs him to the pro-
 “ perest Methods of proceeding. Upon
 “ such an Occasion, not the longest Jour-
 “ ney, or most tedious Solicitation, no
 “ Appearance of Trouble or of Danger
 “ can discourage him.

“ Sincerity is so essential a Part of
 “ Friendship, that no one so perfect, in
 “ its other Branches, can be wanting in
 “ that. But how, you will say, can this
 “ be reconciled with Politeness? How can
 “ that, whose utmost Care is never to of-
 “ fend, ever venture upon telling a dis-
 “ agreeable Truth? Why this is one of
 “ the Wonders, which a good and a right
 “ Intention, well directed can perform:
 “ and Cynthio can even oblige People, by
 “ telling them very plainly of their Faults.”

I per-

I perceive, I have wandered from my first Intention, which was only to give a general Sketch of this Character, as influenced by that Humanity, whose Consequence is such a Desire of pleasing, as is the Source of Politeness. But before I have done with it, I must add this one distinguishing Stroke, that though many People may excel in separate good Qualities and Accomplishments, more than Cynthio, yet I never saw them so equally proportioned, or so agreeably blended as in him, to form that whole Behaviour that makes him the fittest Example for an Essay on this Subject.

E S S A Y III.

LET me be allowed to make a new Word, and let that Word be *Accommodableness*.

The Disposition of Mind, I mean by that Word to express, is of such constant and universal Use, that it is certainly worth while to distinguish it by a Name of its own. We English have not much of it in our Nature, and therefore it is no Wonder we have not an Expression to suit it. It is such a Flexibility of Mind, as hinders the least Struggle between Reason and Temper. It is the very Height and Perfection of good Humour, shown as well in an instantaneous Transition from Mirth to Seriousness, when that is best suited to the Place and People, as it is in the liveliest

Flashes of Gaiety. It is an Art of sitting so loose from our own Humours and Designs, that the mere having expected, or intended, or wished a Thing to be otherwise than it is, shall not, for a Moment ruffle our Brows, or discompose our Thoughts. It is an Art, for it requires Time and Pains to perfect it.

All this is indeed included in what has been said of Politeness, but it is worth dwelling upon in a new Light. It is the Means of making every trifling Occurrence in Life, of some Use to us. For want of it, *Liking and Luck* are ever at cross Purposes. To Day we are sad: and then if we fall into a jovial Company, all their Mirth seems displaced, and but grates upon our Fancy. To-morrow, we are as whimsically determined to be merry: and then, how unsuited is our Temper, to the Scenes of sad Improvement, we so often meet with! How unfit are we then to commiserate the Wretched, or to draw just Considerations from the melancholy Side of Life!

This

This Body, by some Accident or other, we look upon in a Light of Prejudice : A foolish Story told of them, or perhaps a disagreeable Look, or a peculiar Trick, makes us lose all the Advantage, that might be had, by attending to their more valuable Qualifications : for every Body has some. — Another we despise, merely for our own Ignorance of their Worth. We look upon Persons in a Light of Burlesque, from some ridiculous Circumstance; when, perhaps, their serious Character, has something really good in it, that is quite past over. I have felt it myself often : and that makes me dwell upon the Subject, for I think, one always talks best from Experience.

I have read somewhere, a Fairy Story, in which a Princess is described, born under such a Charm, that till she came to a certain Age, it was impossible she should ever enjoy any lasting Satisfaction. The Happiness of her ensuing Life depended upon the observing this Condition : And

for that Reason, those Fairies, who had the Care of her Education, were most exact in their Attention to it. Did she begin to take Pleasure in any Employment? It was immediately changed, and her Application was called off to some new one. As soon as she had got over the Difficulties of that, she was engaged in a third: and so on, Year after Year, till she was quite grown up. If any Amusement was proposed, if she began to taste the least Delight, in the Splendour of a public Show, or the Gaiety of a rural Landscape, the Scene was immediately shifted, and a dull Solitude took the Place of what had charmed her.

Such is our Situation in this World. In such a Case, all the poor Princess had for it, was to shift her Inclinations, as fast as the Fairies could her Amusements: and when she had learned to do this, I think indeed, one might answer for it, that the rest of her Life could not fail to be happy.

Our

Our Humours and Dispositions are certainly as various, as the Accidents that happen to exercise them: but then, the Misfortune is, that they are frequently misplaced. I have often been in a Humour for moralizing and improving, when my Fancy had much more properly been filled with gay Images of an Assembly: Then, that Idleness might not lose its Due, how frequently have my Thoughts wandered from a philosophical Lecture, to a crowded Park, nay sometimes from a Sermon, to a Ball-Room?

To continue always in the same Turn of Humour, be it ever so graceful on some Occasions, is nothing better than dancing smoothly out of Time. Some People have such an eternal Simper upon their Face, that they will tell you the most melancholy Story, or express the most pathetic Concern, with a Smile. Others have such an Air of earnest Attention, that they will listen to a Gossip's Tale with the Gravity of a Philosopher.

All have some good Qualities, something or other, in their Character or Conversation, that rightly attended to, we may be the better for. When in Company with People of mere good Humour, we should waken all the mirthful Faculties of our Mind, and take this Time for unbending our more serious Thoughts. We are not to consider whether one is of a proper Rank, or another of an agreeable Aspect, or whether we might not be better employed in our Closets, or better engaged in Company elsewhere: but accommodate ourselves to the present Situation, and make the best of it. Be the Company ever so dull, they are human Creatures at least, capable of feeling Pleasure, or Uneasiness, in some Degree, of being obliged or dis-obliged: and therefore, if we are ever so dissatisfied ourselves, if we may contribute any Way to the Satisfaction of our stupid Companions, good Nature will find it no disagreeable Employment, and it may well enough be put in the Balance, against most of those, we are so angry to be interrupted in.

Had

Had I fet my Heart on such a favourite Scheme? and am I disappointed? This is what Children well educated can bear with great good Humour, and are rewarded with Sugar Plums. Shall People then, who have the Use of Reason, and the Pleasure of Reflection upon reasonable Actions, be more childish than they, and add one disagreeable Thing to another, by tying ill Humour to the Heels of Disappointment?

The Mind, that is absolutely wedded to its own Opinions, will cherish them to a Degree of Folly and Obstinacy, that would be inconceivable but for frequent Instances: very frequent indeed in this Country, which is reckoned, I believe justly, to abound in Humourists, more than almost any Nation of the habitable Globe. Whether this be one Effect attending on the glorious Stubbornness of the Spirit of Liberty, or whether we take some Tincture from the November Sullenness of the Climate, I know not: But our Want of Accommodableness

dableness is very perceivable in the Reception, which our common People usually give to Foreigners. Their Language is ridiculed, their Manners observed with a haughty Kind of Contempt: all Minds seem to sit aloof to them, as if they were Enemies, Encroachers, that have nothing to do amongst us, no Right to give us Trouble, or put us out of our Way.

If we would but learn to put ourselves a little in the Place of others, we should soon learn, with Pleasure, to suit ourselves to their Disposition. But we are apt to imagine, that every Body must see every Thing, just in the same Light that it appears to us: if they do not, it is very strange, and they are no Companions for us. Thus, it seems monstrous, in a Foreigner to speak our Language oddly, when we are so perfectly acquainted with it ourselves. We are prodigiously inclined to think People impertinent, for asking Questions about what we know very well ourselves: unless indeed we happen

to

to be in a Humour of dictating and instructing, and then it is a Crime of the same Nature, for People to know any Thing before Hand, that we have a Mind to tell them.

Thus we forget our first Opinions of Places, Things, and People, and wonder that others do not, at first Sight perceive them, in the same Light that we do, just at that Time: though perhaps it is by Dint of Reflection, that we have placed them in it. It may however be speaking too generally to say *we*. I am sure I have often experienced this in myself.

It was the distinguishing Character of a poor Idiot, whom I had once Occasion to see a good deal of, that he had so little of this Accommodableness, as to be quite outrageous, upon the least Alteration, in any trifling Circumstances, he had been used to observe. He express his Anger, in one Way indeed, and We express ours in another, or perhaps are wise enough to

keep most of it to ourselves: but there still remains enough to take off all the Grace of what we do, or submit to, thus unwillingly, and the Principle of Folly, that makes us feel so strong a Dislike, is the same in both: only this poor Creature deserved Pity, while in us, it is a Matter of Choice.

ESSAY

VI [35] E S S A Y IV.

THERE is no one Disposition of the human Heart, that affords such exquisite Pleasure, or Pain, as that, which we call *Delicacy*. It is the Polish of the Mind, soiled by the least Breath, and affected by the slightest Touch. A delicate Turn of Thought is, in some, Cases extremely agreeable, is the Sign of a valuable Mind, (for base Metals are not capable of receiving any great Degree of Polish) but will not go half so well, through the World, as that which is more plain, and rough.

Yet, as there is something, in this Disposition peculiarly elegant and amiable, People are apt to encourage themselves in it, till from a Grace, it becomes a Weakness, and diffuses Unhappiness to all around

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them,

them, who must weigh with the exactest Care all their Words and Actions: and it is extremely possible, that all their Care may not be enough to prevent giving some grievous Offence, which they never meant, and which will express itself in perpetual Smartnesses, or an eternal Flow of Tears, according as the Constitution of the delicate Person inclines to Anger, or to Melancholy. In the latter Case, it is more unhappy than in the former: for hasty Anger is easily past off, but no Body of good Nature can bear to see a Person affected, in the most painful Manner, by Things so trifling, as they may be guilty of, every Moment, without knowing any Thing of the Matter.

This Consideration should make us extremely careful in our Behaviour, to those, amongst whom we live. Perhaps some little Heedlessness of ours, may seem a most cruel Slight to one, we never intend to grieve, and oppress a worthy Mind with the most melancholy Dejection. A careless

less Word, spoken quite at Random, or merely by Rote, may give a delicate Heart the most anxious Distress: and those of us, who have the most Prudence and good Nature, say and do an hundred Things, in our Way of talking, about Characters we know little of, or behaving towards those, to whom we little attend, that have much more grievous Consequences, than we are aware of.

But then, on the other Hand, we should, in ourselves, most strictly guard against all Excess of this Delicacy; and though we cannot help feeling Things, in the quickest Manner, for the Moment, we should arm our Reason against our Feeling, and not permit Imagination to indulge it, and nurse it up into a Misery: for Misery, if indulged, it will certainly occasion: Since an Excess of Delicacy is the Source of constant Dissatisfaction, through too eager a Pursuit of something every Way higher, than is to be had.

The

The Person of delicate Judgment sees every Thing, as it were, with a microscopic Eye: so that what would be a pleasing Object, to a common Spectator, is, to him, unsupportably coarse, and disagreeable. The Person of lively and delicate Imagination disdains the common *Routine* of Comfort and Satisfaction; and seeks for Happiness in an airy Sphere not formed to give it: or pursues Misery, through a wild and endless Maze, which at every Turning grows more inextricable. By this refined Delicacy of Sentiment, to put ourselves on so different a Footing, from the rest of the World, that it is scarce possible, we should ever understand one another, is only vain Vexation.

In Friendships especially, this Excess of Delicacy is often of fatal ill Consequence. From hence spring Suspicions and Jealousies; from hence arise Doubts and Disquiets that know no End, unless it be, that they often quite weary out the Patience of the Persons, whom they are thus perpetually

ally teasing for their Affection. I have known Instances of this Kind, that are sufficient Warnings against it.

As for the Affairs of common Life, they can scarcely go on where every little Nicety is to be turned into a Matter of Importance. I knew a Family, good, agreeable, sensible, and fond of each other, to the highest Degree: but where each was so delicate, and so tender of the Delicacy of the rest, that they could never talk to one another, of any serious Business, but were forced to transact it all, by Means of a third Person, a Man of plain Sense, and a common Friend to all.

Poor Lucius! How much Constraint and real Uneasiness does he suffer from the Delicacy, that proceeds from having a Genius infinitely superior to most he meets with. By having a Mind above the low Enjoyments of this State of Being, he is deprived of many Hours of most innocent Cheerfulness, which other People are hap-

py in. He has an Understanding, so fitted for the deepest Researches, and the sublimest Speculations, that the common Affairs and Engagements of Life, seem vastly beneath him. He has a Delicacy, in his Turn of Mind, that is shocked every Day, by the less refined Behaviour and Conversation of the Generality of Mankind: and it must be a very chosen Society indeed, that he prefers to his beloved Solitude. This Disposition gives him a Reservedness, that in another Character, might pass for Pride, as it makes him mix less freely in those Companies, that he is unavoidably engaged in. However it has certainly this ill Consequence, that it makes his Virtues of less extensive Influence, than they would be, if they were more generally known. He is naturally, extremely grave, and perhaps with the Assistance of Reason and Experience, which prove the Insufficiency of any Pleasures or Attainments, in this Life, to make us happy; this Seriousness is heightened so as to give himself many a gloomy Moment, though other People never feel the Effect

E S S A Y IV. 41

Effect of it, by any ill Humour, or Severity towards them. A Turn of Mind so superior to any of the common Occurrences, or Amusements of Life, can seldom be much affected or enlivened by them : but as so excellent an Understanding must have the truest Taste for real Wit, so no one has a more lively Sense of all, that is peculiarly just and delicate. These Pleasures, however, are little Compensations, for the much more frequent Disgusts, to which the same Turn of Mind renders him liable. Happy, thrice happy are those humble People, whose Sensations are fitted to the World they live in.

Those Pleasures, which the Imagination greatly heightens, it will certainly make us pay dear enough for : since the Pain of parting with them, will be greatly increased, in full Proportion, not to their Value, but to our Enjoyment. The World was intended to be just what it is ; and there is no Likelihood of our succeeding in the romantic Scheme of raising it above what it is. To
distract

distract ourselves with a continual Succession of eager Hopes, and anxious Fears, is a Folly destructive to our Nature, and to the very End of our Being. We are formed for moderate Sensations either of Pain or Pleasure; to feel such Degrees of Uneasiness only as we are very able to support: and to enjoy such a Measure of Happiness, as we may easily resign, nay thankfully too, when Religion has opened the Prospect to a brighter Scene: to meet with many Rubs and Difficulties, which we must get over, or stumble over, as well as we can: to converse with Creatures imperfect, like ourselves, and to bear with all their Imperfections. It seems then, that the only Way of passing through Life, as we ought, is to place our Minds in a State of as great Tranquillity, as is consistent with our not becoming stupid.

E S S A Y V.

THE Advantages of Frugality do not deserve to be less considered than those of Generosity: for where alas! shall Bounty find its necessary Fund, if thoughtless Prodigality has squandered it away. When I hear of thousands, and ten thousands spent by People, who in the midst of immense Riches reduce themselves to all the Shifts and Pinches of a narrow Fortune, I know not how to recover my Astonishment at the Infatuation, that leads them to annihilate such Treasures: for it may really be called annihilating them, when they are spent to no one good Purpose, and leave no one honourable Memorial behind them. A Fortune thus lavished away becomes the Prey of the Worthless: and is like a Quantity of Gold Dust, dispersed

dispersed uselessly in the Air, that might have been melted down, and formed into regal Crowns, and Monuments of Glory.

I think one now scarcely ever hears an immense Fortune named, but somebody adds with a Shake of the Head—*It is vastly run out—He is in very narrow Circumstances—They are in great Straits.*—Ask the Occasion, and you will find few Instances of real Generosity, or public Spirit, or even of a well judged Magnificence: but all has gone amongst Voters, Fidlers, Table Companions, profuse Servants, dishonest Stewards, and a strange Rabble of People, that are every one of them the worse for it. This is pitiable: and for this, and nothing else, a Man of Quality is reduced to all the Meanneſſes imaginable. He must be dependent: he must court the Smiles of Power: he must often be rapacious and dishonest.

I remember a Friend of mine had once an excellent Conceit of a Cave, at the upper

per End of which were two enchanted Glasses, with Curtains drawn before them, that were to be consulted every Evening, in order for the forming a Judgment of the Actions of the Day. The first Glass showed what they *might* have been, and what Effects such and such Opportunities ought to have produced. When the Curtain was undrawn before the other, it showed, *tout au naturel*, what they *had* been. Were one to contemplate, in these Glasses, on the spending one of those great Estates, which reduce our fine People to such Difficulties, what a coup d'œil the first would present! A wide Track of Country adorned and improved: a thousand honest Families flourishing on their well cultivated Farms: I cannot tell whether one should not see a Church or two, rising in a plain sort of Majesty amidst the Landscape. In another Part of it, would appear Manufactures encouraged, Poverty relieved, and Multitudes of People praying for the Welfare of the happy Master. His Tradesmen, his Domestics, every Body that had
any

any Connection with him, would appear with a cheerful and a grateful Air. They, in their Turns, would dispense Good and Happiness to all, with whom they had any Concern. At the Family Seat, would be seen an unassuming Grandeur, and an honest Hospitality, free from Profuseness and Intemperance, one may say as of Hamlet's two Pictures,

Such should be Greatness:—Now behold what follows

For here is Fortune, like a mildew'd Ear
Blasting each wholesome Grain——

In the true historical Glass, what may we see? Perhaps a Pack of Hounds, a Cellar, an Election. Perhaps a Gaming-Table, with all those hellish Faces that surround it. An artful Director perhaps, and an indolent Pupil. Oppression gripes every poor Wretch within its Grasp, and these again oppress their own Inferiors and Dependents: All looks hopeless and joyless:

and

and every Look seems to conceal a secret Murmur. On the Fore-Ground perhaps there stands a magnificent Palace, in the Italian Taste: innumerable Temples, Obelisks, and Statues rise among the Woods: and never were Flora and Pomona, Venus and Diana, with all the Train of fabulous Divinities more expensively honoured in Greece and Rome, than in these Fairy Scenes. The Church in the mean Times stands with a Wooden Tower: the Fields are poorly cultivated, the Neighbourhood discontented, and ever upon the Catch to find all possible Faults in those proud Great Ones, with whom they have no cheerful friendly Intercourse. Fine Clothes, and costly Jewels glitter, perhaps, in some Part of the Glass: but how can they adorn Faces grown wan with inward Care: or give Gracefulness to those, who must always have the humbled Air of Inferiority, when they happen to meet the Eye of their unpaid Tradesmen, whose Families are starving upon their Account?

The

The Man of thoughtless good Nature, who lavishes his Money to a hundred poor Devils, (as is the genteel Phrase to call those, that have run themselves into Misery from mere Worthlessness) I say, when Wretches, that deserved only Punishment and Ignominy, have drained this generous Sieve of all he had to bestow, to what Grief is he exposed, when he meets with an Object of real Distress, one that has, perhaps, been ruined through his Means, and is forced to say with the fine Gentleman, in Beaumont and Fletcher,

“ I wanted whence to give it, yet his
“ Eyes

“ Spoke for him: These I could have
“ satisfied

“ With some unfruitful Sorrow”——

Would it not be quite worth while for any Body to avoid such Uneasinesses as these, when it can be done merely by a little Thought, and a little Order? Methinks an Exactness of Method, and a frequent Review of Affairs would make every
Thing

Thing perfectly easy. Might it not be possible for a Man of Fortune to divide his Estate into several imaginary Parcels? And, appropriating each to its particular Purpose, spend it, within those Bounds, as freely, and with an Air as open, as the thoughtless Prodigal; and yet be sure, by this Means, never to run out, and never to bestow upon any one Article more than it deserved.

I will suppose myself at this present possessed of ten thousand a Year; nor will the Supposition make me at all vain, gentle Reader, since it implies but the being a Steward to other People, and a Slave to Propriety. Oh it is ten Times the more indolent Thing to have but a little, and yet the same Kind of Management is required in all. Well: but what shall I do with this Estate of mine? First of all I buy me a large and pompous Account Book. Then I consider how much must necessarily be employed in mere Living: and I write down the Sum Total, on the

first Page. This is afterwards subdivided into its proper distinct Articles: and each of them has a Page allotted to itself. And here it must be observed, that there are innumerable Proprieties of Appearance, as indispensibly necessary to the rich Man, as bare Food and Clothing to the Poor. The other Pages of the Book must each have their Title at Top, as thus: *Charities 1000 l.—For the Service of my Friends, and of the Public 1000 l.—For proper Improvements of my Houses, Gardens, Estates, 1000 l.* and so on. I doubt whether Knick-knacks, Cabinets, or any immoderate Expences, in Jewels, Plate, or Pictures, would find a Place in such a List as this.

It would surely be easy, by frequently comparing the daily Articles of Expence under each Head, with the Determination marked at Top, to keep every one within Bounds, and to enjoy what is in our own Power, without, in the least, pining after what is not: For *that* we may read the
Pre-

Precepts of the Stoics : and for the other, let us consider, a little, those Instances, we may see, all around us, of good Characters disgraced by an ill-judged Savingness in some insignificant Particulars, and by a Want of Ease and Propriety, in trifling Expences.

If People have any Esteem for Frugality, they should try to do it honour by showing, that it is not inconsistent with a becoming and a generous Spirit. I have heard very many People accused of Covetousness, and generally hated, under that odious Character, who perhaps had no Principle of that Kind, and who threw away, often, as much upon foolish Expences, that had not struck them in the saving View, as they pinched out of others, which made them look paltry and mean, in the Eyes of the World. Few People I believe are heartily covetous throughout : and this makes it so easy for them to flatter themselves, that they are not tainted at all with a Vice, the very Notion of which

would affront them: and for those in the other Extreme, they too deceive themselves, in the same sort. Whence comes the old Proverb,

Penny wise and Pound foolish.

ESSAY

E S S A Y VI.

THERE are a great many Things, that sound mighty well in the declamatory Way, and yet have no Sort of Truth or Justness, in them. The Equality between Poverty and Riches, or rather, the superior Advantages of the former, is a pretty philosophical Paradox, that I could never comprehend. I will grant very readily, that the short Sleeps of a labouring Man, are full as sweet and wholesome, as the Slumbers indulged upon Down Beds, and under gilded Roofs. I will readily confess, that let People have never so many Apartments, they can be but in one at a Time: and in a Word, that the Luxury and Pageantry, that Riches bring with them, is despicable, and infinitely less eligible, than the Simplicity

of plainer Life. It must be owned too, that Greatness, and Fortune place People in the Midst of innumerable Difficulties : and that they are severely accountable for all those Advantages, they neglect to improve. But so, indeed, a Man is a more accountable Creature than a Hog : and yet none, but a Gryllus, I believe, would prefer the Situation of the latter.

I do not say, that People should upon all Occasions, put themselves forward, and aspire to those dangerous Heights, which perhaps, they were never formed to ascend. The Fable of Phæthon would be much more instructive than such a Lesson as this : but I would say, and say it loudly, to all, whom Heaven has placed already in the Midst of Riches and Honours, that they possess the highest Privilege, and ought to exert themselves accordingly. These People have Advantages of improving their Being to the noblest Purposes : and with the same Degree of Pains and Application, that furnishes the poor Artificer a daily
Pro-

Provision for himself, and his Family, they may become a Kind of beneficent Angels to their Fellow-Creatures, and enjoy themselves, Happiness superior to all Pleasure,

It is a pretty Thought of Seneca, that as a Merchant, whose Goods are considerable, is more sensible of the Blessing of a fair Wind, and a safe Passage, than he that has only Ballast, or some coarse Commodity in the Vessel; so Life is differently enjoyed by Men, according to the different Freight of their Minds. Those of indigent Fortunes are generally obliged to have their's too much filled, with an Attention to provide the low Necessaries of Life. Indeed Riches and Greatness are as strong an Obstacle as the other, to spending Life in Theory and Speculation: But it is, however nobler, and a more delightful Task to provide for the general Good of Multitudes, than for the Subsistence of a few Individuals. I speak of what Riches might be: God knows, not of what they are.

The Rich, the Great, who act an insignificant Part in Life, are the most despicable Wretches of the whole Creation: While the poor, the mean, the despised Part of Mankind, who live up to the Height of their Capacity and Opportunities, are noble, venerable, and happy.

Is it not amazing, that Creatures so fond of Pre-eminence and Distinction, so biased by Interest, so dazzled by Fortune, as all the Race of Men are, should so blindly trample under Foot the only true Advantages of Fortune? The only Pre-eminence, the only Honour, the highest Joy, the brightest Lustre, that all those gay Things, they pursue, could bestow upon them? Where is the Beauty to be found, that will choose to waste her Youth, where no Eye can behold her? Where is the Man of Wit that will sit down contented with his own Admiration, and lock up his Papers in a Chest for his own private Reading? Yet the covetous Man, as far as in him lies, conceals the Advantage he is fondest of,

of, and puts himself, as much as possible, upon a Level with that Poverty, he despises. Good Heaven! That People should not rather choose to lay hold on every honest Means, that can raise them into a Kind of superior Being. Who would not go through Toil, and Pain, and Danger, to attain so glorious a Pre-eminence, an Honour beyond the Olympic Crown of old. And yet it is but at the Expence of a little Openness of Heart, a little Thought and Contrivance, a little honest generous Industry in bestowing properly, that a Man of Rank and Fortune may shine out like the Sun, and see a gay World flourishing under his cheerful Influence.

All these Things have been said a hundred Times. The Miser has been painted in all his unamiable Colours: and the Prodigal has had his Lecture too. But still, methinks, there is a great deal wanting, and I do not know how to express it. The indolent, the thoughtless People of Fortune, want to be put in Mind of their

own Importance. Some are so lazy, some so careless, and some even so humble, that they never once think of themselves as having any Place to fill, or any Duty to perform, beyond the immediate Calls of domestic Life. Alas what a Mistake is this! And what noble Opportunities do they neglect!

But what must People do? They must awaken in their Minds that Principle of Activity and Industry which is the Source of every Thing excellent and Praise-worthy. They should exert themselves in every Way, improve every Occasion, employ every Moment. Let the Great survey the whole Scene, the whole Sphere of their Influence, as the Master-Farmer, from a rising Ground, overlooks the whole of his Estate. The labouring Hinds indeed are confined to a Spot: they have their daily Task appointed, and when that is done, may lay them down to Sleep without a further Care. But the Master must wake, must consider and deliberate.

This

This Spot of Ground wants better Cultivation : That must be laid out to more Advantage : A Shade would be becoming here : In yonder Place I mean to lead the little Rivulet, that wanders near it, to refresh those parched Meadows. Those Husbandmen should be encouraged : These should be rewarded.—A Word, a Look, a Gesture from a Superior, is of Importance. Thus might the Rich, the Great, the Powerful consider in like Manner.

“ This Part of my Fortune will be nobly
 “ employed in relieving the Miserable :
 “ That, in Works of public Generosity :
 “ So much in procuring the agreeable
 “ Ornaments of Life : In this Manner I
 “ may encourage the elegant Arts : By
 “ this Way I may set off my own Character to the best Advantage : And by
 “ making myself beloved and respected,
 “ I shall consequently gain an honest Influence over such as may be bettered by
 “ my good Example : My Advice, my
 “ Approbation will be useful in such a
 “ Case : in *this* I may do Honour to my

“Country: in *that*”——Up and employ yourselves, you who are lolling in easy Chairs, amusing away your Lives over French Novels, wasting your Time in fruitless Theory, or your Fortunes in riotous Excesses. Remember, you have an important Part to act. It is in your own Choice whether you will be, the Figure in the Tapestry, the animated Chair or Flower-Pot, or the Hero that draws the whole Attention of the Theatre, and goes off with a general Plaudit.

E S S A Y VII.

WITHOUT at all pretending to Criticism, it is almost impossible to read a Variety of Books, and not form some Reflexions on the Variety of Stile in which they are writ. One of the first and most obvious, to me, is, that the plainest and least ornamented Stile is ever the most agreeable to that general Taste, which is certainly the best Rule, by which an Author can form himself. Particular Ornaments will not more please some Fancies, than they will displease others. The flowery epitheted Way of Writing wearies the Imagination, by presenting it with a Multitude of wrong Objects, in Way of Simile and Illustration, before it has half informed the Understanding, of what was its main Purpose.

The

The human Mind has so long a Journey to take, in search of Knowledge, that it grows peevish at being led out of the Way, every Minute, to look at Prospects, or gather Daifies. The original Use of Epithets was to paint Ideas stronger upon the Mind, by a Complication of little Circumstances : but, I know not how, of late, they are grown into a Sort of unintelligible Language, that signifies nothing more to the slightly attentive Reader, than, that the Author has a Mind to be poetical; like those Indian Alphabets, which first were the plain Representation of sensible Objects, from thence grew into Hieroglyphics, and last of all, into a mere Cypher.

The common Sort of metaphorical Epithets is very disagreeable. When we would indulge our Fancies with the Idea of a cool limpid running Stream, to have a Piece of Chrystal thrown cross one's Way is quite provoking. I remember two Lines, in a very good Poem, that often offended me,

—and

— and strew
Her Silver Tresses, in the Chrystal Tide.

Would not the Image be more natural, and
make less Clatter in one's Head, thus :

— and strew
Her hoary Locks, wide floating o'er the
Stream.

Gold and Jewels do not become the
Muse herself, half so well, as an elegant
Simplicity. But elegant it must be, and
noble, or else the Stile of Writing dege-
nerates into mere chit-chat Conversation.
Nor should a Writer think it any Restraint,
that he is obliged to attend to the minutest
Strictness of Grammar: since whatever
serves to make his Composition most clear
and intelligible, contributes to the giving
it the greatest Beauty it can possibly have.
For this Reason, too long Sentences, and
the Intricacies of Parentheses ought, by
all Means, to be avoided, however the
Sun-

Sun-like Genius of some Authors, may have gilded those Clouds into Beauty.

This one Rule of Perspicuity will hold good, for all Sorts of People, from those of mere Business, to those of absolute Speculation. The next is, that Writers put no Constraint upon their natural Turn of Mind, which will always give a truer Spirit than is within the Reach of any Art. Yet often from an Admiration of that in others, which is utterly unsuitable to themselves, they put on a Character in Writing, that is mighty difficult to support throughout. The Affectation of Wit and Humour leads into that low Burlesque, which is, of all Dulness, the most disagreeable. Unable to reach the true Sublime, they are willing to bring it down to their own Pitch. Hence spring such Multitudes of Travesties, Parodies, and such like Perversions of Passages really fine: When, if they can but present you with low, and often dirty Images, instead of
such

such as are noble and beautiful, yet in such a Manner, as strongly to put you in Mind of the Difference, all the Way, they are greatly conceited of their own Ingenuity. Where any of these have real Humour in them, it must arise from some particular Occasion: and is by no Means inherent in that Kind of Composition.

But while little Wits think, that lowering and debasing the Sublime, is being witty, those, who with an exalted Genius, have a sportive Liveliness of Temper, can find Means of ennobling their easiest and lightest Compositions. Of all People Mr. Prior has succeeded the best, in this Way, if he had not, now and then, allowed his Pen too much Licence for the Demureness of the Muse. As Homer's Dreams were the Dreams of Jupiter, so Prior's Gaieties are the Sportings of Apollo: and where he introduces his fabled Deities, in a mirthful Scene, it is not by depressing them to the Level of merry Mortals, but by employ-

employing (to use the Phrase of an excellent modern Author) “ a new Species of the Sublime that has, hitherto, received no Name.”

There is a celebrated Passage in Longinus, in which he prefers, upon the whole, a Mixture of striking Faults and Beauties, to the flat Correctness of an uncensurable, laboured Author. One of the Books, which to those, who for Want of Translations, can know little of Isocrates and Demosthenes, has most convincingly proved the Justness of this Determination, is Dr. Barrow's Sermons, who seems most exactly to answer what Lorginus says of the irresistible Greek Orator. His Expressions are frequently singular, and though crowded together, are so poured out from the Abundance of one of the best Hearts, that the finest turned Periods are insipid in Comparison. His Genius too, whatever were the Littlenesses of Language, in those Days, was certainly poetical and noble:
and

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and his Imagination so warmed and delighted with the fairest View of every Thing in the Scheme of Providence, that Religion wears, through every Page of his, its proper Grace.

ESSAY

E S S A Y VIII.

TO enliven an Airing, the other Morning, Prior's Henry and Emma was read aloud, to the Company; and the different Sentiments they exprest, upon it, determined me, to put down my own upon Paper, as that Poem has always been a Favourite with me, and yet wants, I think, a good deal of Explanation, and Excuse.

The Tale is introduced, in a Way so much more interesting, than one commonly meets with, in Pastoral Dialogues; with Circumstances of such Tenderneſs and Delicacy, and Images ſo ſmiling and engaging, that one is concerned, before his Characters have ſaid a Word, to have them keep up to the Ideas, which partial Imagination had formed of each. That of Emma

is

is distinguished by something so peculiarly mild and affectionate, that if we do not attend to this, as her chief Characteristic, we shall be apt to be surprized at many of her most beautiful Sentiments, as too different from the common Ways of thinking, on such Occasions.

Emma susceptible of soft Impressions, beyond what were to be wished in a Character, were it set up for a general Pattern, her Soul entirely turned to those tender Attachments, that are not inconsistent with strict Virtue, had long been wooed with every irresistible Art by an accomplished Youth, whose Virtues and Excellencies could not but discover themselves, in such a Space of Time, on a thousand Occasions. By the Characters given, on each Side, their Passion seems to have been grounded on a just Esteem: and the known Truth and Goodness of Henry had produced in her Mind, such an unlimited Confidence, that it was impossible she could suspect him of any Crime. To try her Constancy,

he

he accuses himself, in the harshest Terms, as a Murderer : but it was easy for Emma's Heart to furnish him with sufficient Excuses. The wild unsettled State of the Island, in those early Times, torn by so many, and so fierce Factions, involved the Young and Brave, in perpetual Bloodshed. What was called Valour in one Party, would, in the other, be branded as Murder. In those Days, the vast Forests were filled with generous Outlaws : and the Brave mixt with the Vile, from a Likeness of Fortune, not of Crimes.

I have dwelt upon this, because, at first Reading, it offended me to imagine, that Emma should be so unmoved with a Supposition of her Lover's Guilt, and continue her Affection, when she must have lost her Esteem. That Point, I think, is now cleared up : But I am extremely sorry, that, to prevent all Scandal, Prior did not alter a few Lines, in the Answer she makes him, to his open Declaration of Inconstancy. In spite of all Prejudice, there is
certainly

certainly a Want of all Spirit and Delicacy in it. If what he told her was Fact, he could not be faultless, nor could her Affection continue to be innocent. The same mild Benevolence to her Rival, might surely have been exprest without the Extravagance of desiring to attend them as a Servant. Permit me to insert the Alteration here.

“ Go then, while I, in hopeless Absence

“ prove

“ By what I shall endure, how much I

“ love.”

This potent Beauty, this triumphant Fair
This happy Object of our different Care,
Her shall my Thoughts, through various Life attend,

With all the Kindness of the fondest
Friend :

Loved for thy Sake, howe’er her haughty
Scorn

May triumph o’er me, as a Thing forlorn,

For

72 E S S A Y VIII.

For her my warmest Wishes shall be made
And Heav'n implored for Blessings on
her Head.

O may she never feel a Pain, like mine !
Never—for then a double Guilt were
thine.

Here must I stay : Like Thought,
were Actions free
No Wrongs, no Hardships should
divorce from Thee

Thy Emma,—not a Rival's Company.
But wandering Thoughts, and anxious
Cares are now

All that a rigid Virtue will allow.

Go happy then, forget the Wretch
you leave,

Nor for a Woman's Weakness vainly
grieve.

Thy Fate decreed Thee false : the same
Decree

Entailed a hopeless Constancy on me.

The few following Lines, in the same
Speech, are so easily adapted to these, that
the

the Change in them, is not worth mentioning.

There is something infinitely beautiful in all the tender Passages of this Poet. He has the Art of representing all the Softness of the Passion, without any of its Madness. Other Writers raise their Expressions, with such Hyperboles, as are a Profanation of much nobler Sentiments. Methinks Softness and Tenderness are the only Characteristics of a mortal Love. The Strains of Adoration ill become Anacreon's Lyre; and are ill address'd to human Imperfection. Those imagined everlasting Attachments, that rebel against Mortality; those infinite Ideas, that grasp at all Excellence, in one finite Object, are fatal Absurdities, that have both their Guilt and Punishment.

This Kind of Sentiment is quite unnecessary: we may survey those we love, surrounded with all the Frailties and Imperfections of human Nature, and yet be par-

tial to these Imperfections, as we are to our own. Pity does but endear the tender Tie, where it is not incompatible with Esteem. The Pleasures of giving and receiving, from the dear Object of Affection, mutual Protection, Comfort and Relief, are the Joys that we are formed most sensible of, as such a Disposition was, in our present Situation, most necessary for the Preservation, and Happiness of Society.

The Expressions of this Kind of Sentiment are, on the other Hand, as offensively misused, when applied to sacred Subjects, as they too often are by the soft Enthusiasm of constitutional Pietists. Of human Love, Kindness, Compassion, mutual Care, mutual Assistance, mutual Forgiveness of a thousand little Blemishes and Errors, are necessary Ingredients, have their Merit, and their Reward. All that refined Caprice, that shows its Kindness, like Alicia in Jane Shore,

"In everlasting Wailings, and Com-
plainings,"

is as contrary to this System, as it is to the Happiness of whoever is honoured by its Persecution; and proceeds from a Failure, in Point of Confidence, which, when once the Honour of a Character, justly esteemed worthy, is seriously engaged, should remain unshaken as a Rock. This is prettily expressed, by Prior's Celia,

Reading thy Verse, who heeds, said I
If here, or there, his Glances flew:
O free for ever be his Eye,
Whose Heart to me is ever true.

Another great, as great a Contradiction to the amiable Kind of Temper, that Prior describes, is that violent Detestation upon even just Cause of Offence, which so much too often verifies the Poet's Expression,

Heaven has no Curse, like Love to Hatred turn'd,

Nor Hell a Fury, like a Woman scorn'd.

The Hatred of Anger can justly proceed only from Injury. Real, premeditated Injury can proceed from no such Character, as could ever be the Object of a well placed Love: and therefore, in this last, the Injury retaliates on a Person's own mistaken Choice: who has therefore no more Reason to be angry with the other, for not acting up to an ideal Perfection, than to be displeased at any other Instance of wrong Behaviour in those, who never were the Objects of any just Partiality.

But if the Character be mixt, faulty indeed, but not totally bad, Pity methinks should gladly take hold on the Occasion, and banish, at once, all Bitterness of Resentment. Religion itself forbids the Spirit of uncharitable Anger and Revenge. When there has ever been a real Affection, it can never,

never, I fancy, be so rooted out, as to give place to those hateful Emotions.

Whoever then yield up their Minds to these Excesses, must confess their former Partiality to have been founded merely in Pride, Vanity, and Selfishness: for Kindness and Benevolence will never cease to exist, whilst their Objects remain, in any Degree unchanged. If those Objects were only our dear selves, every Disappointment of our Pride, Interest, and Vanity will wound us to the Heart. But if our Thoughts had a more generous Aim, if the Happiness of one dearer than ourselves, was the Center of our Wishes, we shall joyfully acquiesce in any Means, by which that Happiness may be attained, laying ourselves entirely out of the Case: and should the Injury to us, be ever so grievous, we shall only wish for them, with the same disinterested Ardour, Aristides did for the Athenians, who had banished him, that the Time may never come, when they shall repent it.

E S S A Y IX.

I KNOW nothing more common, and almost unavoidable, than the Disposition of censuring those Manners and Inclinations in others, which we are sensible would, in our own Tempers be faulty, or which lie cross to the Bent of our natural Humours. Yet I am persuaded, in many of these Instances, were we to make but common Allowances for the Difference of Constitution, of Situation, of Knowledge, and of Perception, we should find, according to a good-natured French saying, that *Tout le Monde a Raison.*

That Tenderness, which we feel for a true Friend, is, in some Minds, so inseparably blended with every Idea, that the dearer half of every Enjoyment is liable

to be torn away at once, and the Stroke of a Moment shall cast its Gloom over the longest Years of Life. Kindness and Gratitude, the very Laws of Constancy, and the Frame of human Nature, seem to exact of us this melancholy Return, for all that refined and superior Happiness, which in such an Union, we have enjoyed.

I cannot help imagining however, that there may be a good deal of Reason on the contrary Side: and as one never is so sensible of the Force of Reason, as when it is heightened by the Eloquence of some present Feeling; so this came most strongly into my Head, during some solitary Hours of Illness, that very lately put me in Mind of such an eternal Separation from my Friends. The Enjoyments of Life are what, I believe, all Persons of serious Thought, would easily resign for themselves, when they are sure, at the same Time, to be freed from its Disquiets. But, to think that we may carry away with us, into the Grave, all the Joy and Satisfac-

tion of those, to whom we ever wish the most; and leave them behind us, in a World where every Support is wanting; entirely destitute of any (of any such I mean, as the ordinary Methods of Providence have appointed) is the only Reflection, which, at such a Moment, can disturb the Composure of an innocent and religious Mind.

I do not know how far the Pride of giving Pain may extend, in some People, but for myself I protest, that as earnestly as I wish to be remembered with a kind Esteem, I could not bear the Thought of that Remembrance being a painful one. For this Reason, I was summoning up, in my Mind, all that might be alledged, for what I used to call Lightness of Temper, and found it much more, than I had imagined.

Indeed, if the Persons, we lament, were truly dear to us, we ought, for their Sakes, to restrain that immoderate Sorrow, which,

which, if they could behold it, we are sure, that it would be with the utmost Concern. This, however, is an Argument, that will by no Means hold, in all Cases: but there are others more general, I will not argue that so short a Life, as ours, seems to contradict the Idea of eternal Attachments: because I cannot help flattering myself that they may be continued, and improved through every future State of Being. But that they ought to be so moderated, as to contradict no Purpose of the State, we are at present placed in, is a Truth, that will scarcely be denied. The Inferiority of our Station, the Frailty and Imperfection of our Nature, make Submission to unerring Wisdom, one of our first Duties: and how do we set ourselves up, in Opposition to it, when upon its withdrawing any one Blessing, however kindly to us, we stubbornly determine to shut our Minds against every other, which it indulgently continues!

Yet, after all these Considerations, the Characters of Arachne and Maria still surpass me, though they no longer give me the Disgust they used to do. To hear them talk, with the greatest good Nature of any present Object of Compassion, otherwise ever so indifferent to them: to see how really they are affected by every little Instance of Kindness, and how happy they are in every trifling Amusement, one would imagine them extremely susceptible of Impressions. But then, in the Midst of a gay Conversation, to hear them run over, without the least Emotion, a long List of once intimate Friends, and then go on as earnestly about Trifles, as if such People had never been.—It is impossible not to wonder at their happy Constitutions, and eternal Flow of Spirits. When I tell you, I really esteem these Women, shall I be reckoned severe, if I say they are ingenious, without Parts, and good humoured, without Sentiments?

Theagenes

Theagenes is scarcely less happy, in his Frame of Mind, but more so, in his Strength of Reason. His Genius is the most extensive, his Imagination the most flowery that can be: and these supply perpetual Employments for his Mind, diverting it from too deep an Attention to melancholy Subjects. His Temper is really generous and benevolent: this makes him interested in every Body's Welfare, that comes within his Reach: and such an Activity of Mind is the surest Food of Cheerfulness. As some People are peculiarly turned to amuse themselves with the Oddnesses and Deformities of Natures, Theagenes has an Eye for its Beauties only. His Speculations wander over the great Objects of the Universe, and find something curious, in the Detail even of mechanic Arts. In Characters, he often errs on the favourable Side; and by this Means sometimes loses, too much, the Distinction of different Kinds of Merit, and subjects himself to a friendly Laugh. As he looks upon the World, with a philosophic,

and a grateful Eye, he can find something endearing, in whatever Part of it he is placed; like a strong Plant, that will take Root and flourish, in every Soil. When one Set of Acquaintance is swept away, by Time, his sociable Temper unites itself with the next, he falls into; and is to be considered, in this View, like a Drop of Water, which, though separated from its native Stream, yet naturally blends with any other Mass of the same Element, while disunited it would lose its Use, and its very Being.

ESSAY

ESSAY X.

IT is a reigning Maxim, through all the Works of Epictetus, that every Body may be happy, if they please: and the Desire of being happy, is but in other Words, the Definition of such a virtuous, and reasonable Self-Love, as was originally implanted in us, by the Author of our Nature, for innumerable wise and gracious Purposes. No Part of our Constitution was given us, without important Reason: and therefore it were Folly to suppose this of so essential a one as Self-Love: but how often it errs, in its Aim, and in its Degree, there needs no Instance to prove; nor that when it does so, it is of all other Principles the most mischievous, as it is ever the most active.

Violent Declamations, either for, or against any Thing of the great Frame of Nature, serve but to shew an injudicious Eloquence, which by proving too much, in Effect proves absolutely nothing. Even Passion may be improved into Merit : and Virtues themselves may deviate into very blameable Errors. Unbiaſſed Reason, if ſuch a Thing there be, in this mixt State of human Nature, ſurveys both Sides at once, and teaches us, to moderate our Opinions, to draw the proper Advantages, from every Circumſtance, and carefully to guard againſt all its Dangers.

The ſame Principle of Self-Love, that adds new Fire and Strength to every Paſſion, when the looſe Rein is given up to Fancy, at other Times checks our Indulgence of thoſe Paſſions, and Purſuits, by making us reflect on the Danger, and Pain, that attends them. The ſame Tie that ſo cloſely binds us down to our own Intereſt, makes us ſympathize, in the Fortunes of our Fellow-Creatures. By Self-Love we learn

learn to pity in others, what we dread, or fear for ourselves. In this Balance we weigh their Distresses with our own: and what Self-Love has shown us, under the Name of such, to ourselves, we shall always suppose the same to every one else, and kindly commiserate the Sorrows, we have felt.

Self-Love endears Virtue to us, by the Tenderness it gives us, for whatever Degree of it we perceive in ourselves: and in the same Way, makes us look with a peculiar Charity on those, whose Faults are of the same Kind with ours. Every Body has, I believe, a favourite Virtue, and a favoured Weakness, which being first used to in themselves, they are sure to give Quarter and Applause to, in every one else. By this Partiality, particular Friendships are generally determined.

There is a lower Degree of it, which would be quite ridiculous, if that too had not its valuable Use in connecting human Kind together. As we grow any Way acquainted

quainted with People, though sometimes it is only by Character, sometimes even by some Circumstance of no more Signification, than having sat at the same Table; received, or paid some trifling Mark of Civility, nay even having it to say, that we have seen them, we assume a Kind of Property in them. Such is the Importance, which the least Connection, with our dear selves, can give to whatever we please; that if we have seen People, but one single Time, it makes often a wide Difference in our Way of attending to what is said about them. Recollect but any Conversation you have been in, where Persons though of very little Consequence, have been talked of, and I dare say you may remember, that two or three of the Company, immediately, fell to recollecting such idle Circumstances in their Knowledge of them, as could receive no Value, but from that Knowledge itself.

This Disposition, I think, shows how much we were intended to mix in Life;

and

and it must be a strong Reason, that will draw the same Advantages for Practice, from the enlarged Views, given by Reading and Speculation, which even the commonest Understandings are fitted to receive, from their natural Constitution. If these are neglected, we fall into a thousand Faults, of which every one carries its own Punishment along with it. People who confine themselves strictly, to a small Circle of Acquaintance, are in great Danger of contracting a Narrowness of Mind: while those, who enter freely into Society, gain by it such an Ease, and Openness of Temper, as makes them look upon every Interest, and Pleasure, to be, in some Degree, their own.

The Great, who live immured, as it were, within the Inclosures of their vast Possessions, look upon those of a lower Rank, as Inhabitants of a distant World from themselves. If ever they have any Thing to do with them, it is Matter of Constraint, and Uneasiness, and therefore
never

never can be done with a good Grace; Their Sentiments, and Amusements are something delicate and mysterious, that the Vulgar are not supposed capable of apprehending, but are to be kept at an awful Distance, which, if ever they leave, it is insufferable Intrusion.

All distinct Sets of People are apt to consider themselves as separate from the rest of Mankind. Hence the perpetual Enmities and Prejudices of different Professions: Hence the continual Opposition of Parties, Sects, and Ages: Hence the general Censures, thrown at Random, on all. When once what we have censured and laughed at, comes to be our own Case, we learn to make those reasonable Allowances, that, before, we never so much as thought of.

A Beauty, that has been severely used by the Small-Pox, learns to esteem People, for something more than the Person. A misrepresented Character can allow a
great

great deal for the Uncharitableness of People's Opinions, and think mildly of a blemished one. The Age, which at fifteen, seemed almost Antediluvian, grows strangely supportable, as we approach it; and Lysis, in an airy Dress, no longer ridicules People that go without Hoods, after thirty.—I grow tiring. This Subject of Self-Love, affords Matter of serious Reflection and Gratitude. It is surely one of the greatest Marks of infinite Wisdom, that what, at first Sight, may seem only to regard ourselves, is one of the strongest Ties to social Virtue; and that the very Attention to others, which should seem most contrary to our first Notions of Self-love, is indeed, the truest Support, and most rational Pursuit of it, and which alone can preserve it from degenerating, into miserable Weakness and Folly.

Man, like the gen'rous Vine, supported
lives,

The Strength he gains is from the Em-
brace he gives.

On

On their own Axis, as the Planets run
 Yet make at once, their Circle round
 the Sun,
 So two consistent Motions act the Soul,
 And one regards itself, and one the whole.
 Thus God and Nature linked the ge-
 neral Frame

And bad Self-love, and Social be the
 same. POPE

Mad, like the generous Vine, supported
 YASSY

The strength he gains is from the Em-
 brace he gives.

On

XL
[93]
E S S A Y XL

I WAS making a Visit the other Day, to People, that pass for what are called your very sensible clever Folks. They have a large Family of Children, of whom they seem fond without Indulgence: *and to be sure they educate them, mighty well.* Who is more capable of doing it? They are prudent, have good Sense, and know a great deal of the World: but alas, it is this Knowledge of the World, as they call it, that spoils every Thing. “Come hither, my dear,” (said the Lady of the House to a little Girl about five Years old, who was crying to go out of the Room almost as soon as she came in) “Come hither Lucy: Look ye my dear, if you will behave yourself prettily, and go and talk to all the Company, Papa will give

“ give you a fine new Doll To-morrow.” —

This you may be sure, stopt the Crying for the present. But what will be the Effect of it? Every Time Miss Lucy wants a new Play-thing, she has only to misbehave herself, and she is sure of being bribed into good Humour again. Thus by an Excess of good Management in her Mamma, the little Gipsy will be taught to be artful and peevish, at an Age, whose greatest Ornament is Innocence and good Humour.

Two or three Instances more, of the same Kind of Prudence, had quite awakened my Sincerity, and I could not forbear speaking of it, with the Freedom of an old Acquaintance, as soon as the more formal Part of the Circle was dispersed. “ My “ dear” (replied Prudentia, with a compassionate Kind of Smile) “ you have lived “ in the Clouds, all your Days, and I am “ sorry to see you are not out of them yet. “ For my Part, who have long been sensible, that it is upon this Earth, and not “ up in the Air, that I am to act my Part “ in

“ in Life, I confess, nothing seems more
 “ natural to me, than that Children should
 “ be taught to follow the same Motive, by
 “ which they are sure to be actuated, all
 “ the rest of their Lives.”—Can you pos-
 sibly mean so low a Motive as Interest?
 said I.—“ I certainly do. For as low as
 “ you think it, you must be sensible, if
 “ you reflect a Moment, that it is what
 “ we all of us pursue. Those, who give
 “ up their Happiness, in the present State,
 “ with the most disinterested Air, do it
 “ only to intitle themselves to the Blessings
 “ of a future one.”

Supposing that this was the Case, inter-
 rupted I, the Nature of the Rewards, in
 these two Instances is so very different,
 that it would hinder you from drawing any
 Inferences, from them, in Favour of your
 own Scheme. If the Greatness, or gai-
 eties of this World were to be our Re-
 compence, I should think, that to reward
 a Child with a Doll or a Hobby-horse
 were framing its Mind to proper Expecta-
 tions

tions and Desires, but—will you let me talk a little upon Subjects, that are certainly above my Reach?—O by all Means, answered Prudentia, Clemene was not to call upon me till eight, and I shall be mighty glad to hear your Romance of Education, in the mean Time. I dare say it will be pretty: but you will find it a mere Romance, I am persuaded, ten Years hence, when you have a Family of your own—well be that as it will: you have given me Leave to talk, and that is all, I have to do at present.

I was going to say, continued I, that I cannot help imagining, that a great Part of our Happiness, in a future State, may arise from a Sense of *Right*, abstractedly from all other Considerations. That, at least, as much of it will proceed from the Thought, of having acted agreeably to the infallible Will of the most perfect of Beings, as from that of having deserved the Favour of the Lord of the Universe, and from the Hopes of any Happiness,

which

which infinite Goodness and Power may bestow on us. In short it seems to me, as if to contribute, each in our inferior Way, to the Order and Beauty of the Universe, was at once the noblest, and the justest Motive, and the highest Reward of Goodness.

“ Lucia is not old enough to enter into
 “ all these abstracted Reasonings,” said
 Prudentia. “ In our World, we must treat
 “ Children, as Children, and convince
 “ them by their Senses, in Default of
 “ their Judgments. I do not know what
 “ People may do in Fairy Land. I sup-
 “ pose, if you had a Son you would ex-
 “ pect, he should be Divinity Professor
 “ at five Years old: but I am afraid,
 “ Lucy would not be at all a fit Wife for
 “ him.”

Look ye, said I, you shall not laugh me out of my Argument: and so arm yourself with Patience, and hear me out. Your Supposition is an excellent good one: but I am afraid, I shall be less mistaken, in sup-

posing, that a Child, who has been taught no other End in behaving itself well, than the gaining some favourite Point, or some darling Toy, will never make a disinterested Minister, will never regard the Reality of Virtue, and will be ready to throw off even the Appearance of it, when it is contradictory to Interest.

“ But must one never give a poor Child
 “ any Encouragement then ?” cried Prudentia.

You mistake me entirely, said I, let good Behaviour be always attended by Reward; but you make it the Consequence of bad Behaviour. As for the particular Rewards of Toys and Sugar-Plumbs, I confess myself, in general, no great Friend to them. The Approbation of Friends is a better Incentive to act Right; and gives, even to such Children, a Pleasure of a much higher Kind. These should be mixed, however, in a proper Degree: and certainly even the last ought not to be too much insisted on. The Notion of doing right,

right, for the Sake of doing right, should be gently inculcated, and strengthened by Degrees, as they advance in Age, and Understanding. This will settle, in Time, into a firm and stedfast Rightness of Mind, which Interest shall never bias, which Adversity shall never shake, which Prosperity shall never enervate. From hence will proceed a calm and even Cheerfulness of Temper, a regular and uniform Conduct, that shall make them for ever happy in themselves, and respected by others. Not the wild Gaiety of one Hour, damped by uneasy Reflections, the next: Not a perpetual Dispute, between Reason and Passion, which makes People good by Fits and Starts only. Miserable is the State of these: and yet perhaps it is almost always the Effect of their not knowing, from the first, what End to aim at. Interest and Ambition attract them, by a thousand glittering Temptations: and yet, in spite of all these, in the Midst of their Pursuit, they feel themselves often checked by the secret Monitor in the Heart, who tells

them, we were formed for something nobler than Greatness, and that, neither Riches, nor Pleasures are the chief End of Life.

But what is this nobler End? Perhaps it is the Applause of Men, the Immortality, which Fame bestows, or at least, the Pleasure of being well looked on, and esteemed by the People among whom we live.—Fatal Imagination! Source of wild and mischievous Exploits, of Wars and Desolations: and, in less noble Minds, the Origin of Hypocrisy, and every hateful Deceit. To look upon the Respect and Admiration of Men, as the ultimate End of Life, is, perhaps, one of the most dangerous Errors, into which we can fall. While it is the Perfection of a Character to pay a proper Regard to it, to rejoice in it as the amiable Attendant of real Virtue: but to be willing to sacrifice the fairest Appearance, to what is really right: and bear the Contempt of Mankind, rather than not deserve their Esteem.

E S S A Y X I I .

LORD BACON has an Essay upon Cunning, that if it falls into wrong Hands, is more likely to teach People Sleights and Devices, than to furnish a Warning against them. And yet the Essay is, in itself, excellent : but methinks it were Time well bestowed to make a just Distinction between Cunning and Prudence, a blameable Artfulness, and a laudable Dexterity. To fix the Bounds of these two Borderers, and determine the nice Difference,

“ Where ends the Virtue, or begins the
“ Vice.”

to exercise the Authority of superior Reason and Understanding, to make use of their lawful Advantages, can surely be no

Fault. On the contrary, it is making the best of our Nature, and employing Faculties that were not intended to lie idle. It is by Reason and Understanding, that human Kind are superior to Brutes of infinitely greater Strength and Force of Body, and the same Sort of Difference subsists among Men. A brutal *Nature* is to be considered in the same Light, whether the Animal, it governs, go upon two Legs or four, only in our Behaviour towards the Brutes of our own Kind, we have this additional Consideration, that there is, at the same Time, a Mixture of something divine and excellent in every human Soul, which claims strongly our Assistance, in subduing that worse half, so prevalent in the Many. Thus, those who by Wisdom lead others less wise to act wisely, not only make them, as inferior Natures, subservient to excellent Purposes, but, at the same Time, do them a real and important Good, and raise them above what they were. When, by innocent Arts, we soothe an uneasy Temper: when, by suspending the Impetuosity

tuosity of a Person's Passion, we give him Leisure to recall his Reason, we do but free him from the worst of Tyrants, and defend the good and reasonable Man, within him, from the hasty Influence of the Madman.

But to do Evil, that Good may come of it, nothing can ever make allowable. The Moment we deviate from Truth and Integrity, our very best Intentions are all poisoned and perverted.

To learn what we can, by an acute Observation of the Countenances and Manners of those with whom we are concerned, is certainly a very blameless Point of Wisdom. To pry into their secret Thoughts, uninterested, and only to betray them, is the Baseness of hearkening at Doors, and looking in at Windows.

The cunningly preventing Objections to any Thing, we have a mind should succeed, by unfairly withdrawing the Atten-

tion of Persons from it, can only be allowable, in Cases of great Exigence, or in absolute Trifles. Mere Humour is a Thing, that we are at Liberty to controul and guide, in what Way we please: but when the Case is of Importance, we are scarcely fit Judges, if it touches ourselves, whether we are at Liberty to deceive another, to what, we may think, ever so good an End. If it is a Person, over whom we have any Authority, the Case is somewhat clearer. Madness and Folly we have a Right to govern, founded in the utter Incapacity of those, who are thus governed: and the Point is indisputable, that Children may be cheated into Health, with a sugared Potion; and that to steal away the Sword of a distracted Person, or humour his Frenzy, till we have secured him, is no Theft nor Deceit.

But to surprize any Person's Reason is utterly unjustifiable: and be the End we propose ever so good, the Means is most detestable. If People will not make a right
Use

Use of Leisure and Reflection, their Fault is great: but if we do not allow them both, ours is much greater.

All Hypocrisy is hateful and despicable: but there certainly are infinite Cases, where others have no Right to know our private Thoughts and Resolutions. Reserve is always allowable. Where we go a Step farther, it is accompanied with a Kind of Shame that is sufficient to instruct us. Yet sometimes, to be sure, we may put on an Appearance of something better than we are, as showing a Disdain of our present Imperfections, and provided we put this on, with a real Intention and Aim of rising to the Mark we have set. But any Appearance *contrary* to what we are in our Hearts and Wishes, is vile.

Once again: People's Humours we may, nay ought to soothe and wind, and govern, as we best can: for Humour is the Childishness of the Mind: Reason its Maturity, and Children ought to submit to the Di-

rection of grown Persons. These are the little Arts that humanize Society, and give it a pleasing and a gentle Air. But to work upon People's Weaknesses, to take Advantage of their Simplicity, to side with their Passions, for our own Purposes—this is that monstrous Policy, which is the Wisdom of this World, and the Foolishness of a better.

To introduce any perplexing Subject in the easiest Manner, provided our Intention be a good one, is but using fit Means to a laudable End. But let all have a Care how they grow too fond of their own Ingenuity and Dexterity, in managing even laudable Undertakings: the Step is too easy to a low Sort of Cunning, that is as far from the true Sublime of Virtue, as any Species of false Wit is from the true Sublime in Writing.

Most Comedies are very pernicious in this Way. They turn upon a thousand little Stratagems and Intrigues, that even
when

when they are innocent tend strangely to corrupt the amiable Simplicity of an honest Mind.

True Taste in every Thing is Plainness and Simplicity, the least Deviation from Nature that is possible; for that is very consistent with the highest Improvement of it. Buildings, Gardens, Statues, Pictures, Writings of all Sorts come within this Rule, and it holds full as strongly in Character and Behaviour. It is the Saying of a very excellent Author, that the true Art of Conversation, if any Body can hit it, seems to be this, an appearing Freedom and Openness, with a resolute Reservedness as little appearing as is possible. I stumbled at it at first: but upon Consideration I must suppose him, and from what goes before it seems most probable, to mean by Reservedness, a strict Watch over ourselves, nor to be led into saying any Thing improper, or that can be of the least Harm to others, and this may most allowably be tempered with such a winning Carriage,

and so easy a good Humour, as shall take off from the Height of Virtue and Discretion all Appearance of Stiffness and Moroseness.

To insinuate Instructions in a pleasing Way, to introduce useful Subjects by unaffected Transitions, and to adorn Truth with a Mixture of pleasing Fictions, is the highest Merit of Conversation, and has nothing to do with Cunning. To watch for a favourable Opportunity of doing People good, or reclaiming them from some Error—who ever complained of being so over-reached?

E S S A Y XIII.

I Do not know whether it is a pragmatical Disposition, or whether it is the Effect of a happy Inclination to hope, in spite of all Discouragements; but for my Part, I cannot abide to hear People in a desponding Way, give up every Attempt in which they cannot thoroughly succeed. It is, generally too, the best and wisest Sort of People, and who would therefore be the most likely to succeed in some Degree, that by carrying their Wishes of Success too far, and finding it impossible to attain them, in their full Extent, sit down in a useless Despair and moralize upon the World: which, because it is too bad to be completely reformed by them, they disdain to mend as far as they might.

Thus

Thus the best and most useful Designs are the soonest discouraged, while those of the Wicked and the Trifling are pursued Day after Day: The one too violent to be checked by any Consideration, that would oppose the ruling Passion: the others too thoughtless to attend to any Difficulties, are continually weaving one Web after another out of their idle Imaginations, forgetful of all that have been brushed away, and thinking themselves well rewarded, if they can catch a few worthless Flies, the Vanities and Amusements of Life.

There is something quite grievous in this to a Mind full of Spirit and Activity, that thinks it glorious, at least to struggle in the Cause of Virtue, though ever so sure to be overpowered. But this is by no Means the Case: every Effort does something, whether enough to be perceived, at the Moment, or not, is very little material: since in Time it will certainly have its due Effect, and whether that be soon enough for our Pride to be flattered
by

E S S A Y XIII. P I E

by it, or not, is a Consideration, which truly generous Minds should overlook. They will, indeed, go on with less Alacrity and Satisfaction; but Ease and Pleasure are, at best, but the secondary Ends of our Being, in such a State of Trial as this Life. If, therefore, we do but our Duty here, we may trust our Reward to Futurity: and we should never urge the Difficulties we meet with, as any Objection to the main Business of our Life, which would by no Means be free from Uneasiness, even should we neglect our Duty.

But, after all, what are these so terrible Difficulties of which People so heavily complain? Ours is not, with all its Faults, an Age, or Country of Persecution or Tyranny: People's Lives and Fortunes are secure; their Virtues involve them in no Danger, and though very possibly they may hinder them from rising in the World, yet though ever so openly and strenuously persisted in, they can do them no great Damage. The utmost they can suffer is
a little

a little Contradiction, a little Chagrin, the Vexation of seeing many good Endeavours turn out to but little good Purpose, the Uneasiness of living amongst a Mixture of People little suited to their better Turn of Mind, and to whom they cannot do so much Good, as they would. But is this a Reason why they should chuse to do none at all? Will the World be the better for all the good People, that are in it, running to hide themselves in Deserts and Solitudes? If it is not, what then is this sudden Retirement, but an idle and selfish Pursuit of their own indolent Inclinations? Does the industrious Planter forbear his Toil, because he expects not to enjoy the Shade of those flourishing Oaks, that will spring from his Acorns? Is he discouraged by the Fear, or Frequency of Blights? Does he at once declare, that all the young Trees are degenerate, and no good to be hoped from them? The worse the World is, the more Need it has of good People's trying to mend it: and should they be ever so unsuccessful, in Regard to themselves,

selves, at least, they have not lost their Pains. Meanly indeed do they betray the Cause of Virtue, if they, its only Friends, suffer themselves to be overcome by so weak Enemies as Spleen and Indolence. Of all People they have the least Cause to despond: They, who pursue the noblest End, by the fairest Means, they who are sure of being in the Right, they who are sure to have the best Applause for it, they who can doubt of nothing, but that their present Fancy may not be gratified in seeing an immediate Success of their Endeavours; and this they need not doubt about neither, since they ought not to think of it at all.

If sometimes such a glorious Instance of Success appears, this ought no more to mislead their Hopes, than the Notion of a magical Wand, that raises Palaces and Gardens in an Instant, should make People disdain to cultivate their Country, by the slow and vulgar Methods of Planting and Building. Inconveniencies that cannot

not be removed may be palliated at least. The first who formed Habitations to defend them from the Cold, were certainly much wiser than if they had sat down and piteously lamented those Inclemencies of the Weather, which none of their Complaints could alter, but against which their Industry could easily secure them.

From this restless Activity in the Mind of Man, this busy Hope for every springing up in his Heart, this Notion of bettering every Situation, and never resting contented while he can aspire to any Thing further, all those Improvements, which form half the Enjoyment of civil Life, have arisen. But with them many Errors have shot forward too: and if the more delicate Flowers of Virtue should be left to sicken and decay in their offensive Shade, the World will soon be over-run with the most noxious Weeds.

E S S A Y XIV.

AMONG those Studies, which are usually recommended to young People, there are few that might be improved to better Uses than Geography. I mean by this, indeed, not a bare Acquaintance with the Outlines of a Map, but some general Knowledge of the People who inhabit this our Globe: not their Situation only, but their History and Manners. It may perhaps be objected, that the Title, which I have given to this Study, belongs to a Subject much more bounded, than the Definition, which I have since been making of it; but I think it may very well include a general Knowledge of History, as extended to all Parts of the habitable Globe, though a more particular Application to the Histories of those few People, who

who have made themselves very remarkable on it, may belong to a different Science.

It is not only the Error of the Peasant Boy, who imagines there is no habitable Land, beyond those Mountains, that inclose his native Valley, but of many more, that we have to guard against, and of much more important Tendency. How the Idea of Greatness and Superiority vanish in a Moment, at the unrolling a large Map of the World, where we see England itself, make so inconsiderable a Figure ! Let our Thoughts be never so strongly attached to any particular Place, in this inconsiderable Spot, it must give us a Moment's Reflection, upon the Insignificance of all those Cares, that center in so imperceptible a Point ! Innumerable Interruptions indeed, trifling and vexatious, will often happen to call down our most exalted Thoughts, but for that very Reason, we have the more Need of returning to them often : and not only taking a transient View of them in our
Minds,

E S S A Y XIV. 117

Minds, as of Shadows passing before a Looking-Glass; but trying to fix them there, by reducing them to something solid, and every Time drawing some practical Precept from them, that may remain in our Hearts, to whatever Trifles Imagination is hurried away, by the various Avocations of Life.

Considered as a Part of Space, the Spot, each of us takes up, is indeed very insignificant: but nothing is so as relating to the internal System of the Universe: and therefore properly to fill the Station, there assigned us, deserves an equal Degree of Care in Persons of every Rank, and is not to be measured by the Acres they possess.

This Sort of Consideration restores a higher Value to the elevated Circumstances of Life, than the former has robbed them of, in the low Notion of intrinsic Value. This should teach the Miser, to esteem his Riches, rather by the Treasure spent, than by his secret Hoard: It should teach every
 Body,

118 E S S A Y XIV.

Body, in general, from the Day-Labourer to the King, by every possible Means to raise themselves, in the moral World, to a Degree of Consideration, that their Place in the natural World can never attain.

Could we, (it is a strange wild Fancy) imagine to ourselves a Map delineated of this, as well as of the other, we should see then, that those vast Continents which overspread the one, would be reduced, upon the other, to moderate Bounds: while the smallest civilized Tracks of Land became extensive Empires, in Proportion to the Improvements they have made, in religious Virtue and Knowledge. This, after all, is the Map of real Consequence, and which will remain with indelible Strokes, long after the other, when all that it relates to, is reduced to nothing.

Can any one imagine *Riches* the Soul of Life and Source of Joy? Let him but consider those vast Tracks of Land, where the Bosom of the Earth is filled with glo-

rious Gems, and glows with unnumbered Mines of Gold. Let him consider these Countries, barbarous and wretched, ignorant of almost every useful Art and speculative Science; untaught both in the Elegance and Use of Life: then let him see in some Character of civilized Generosity, at Home, what it is, that gives all the Gloss to Fortune, and whence alone Riches derive their Lustre.

Is *Power* the Idol of the Soul? Cast your Eyes on the Monarchs of Mogul, or Emperors of China. See how infinitely their Grandeur, in Immensity of Wealth, in Extent of Dominion, in the Adoration of their Subjects, exceeds whatever Greatness we are dazzled with, in those minute Instances, that come within our Sphere of personal Knowledge. Then consider this Greatness in itself; divested of all higher Considerations, what is it, but a wonderful Tale, to astonish Foreigners: the shining Subject of a Book of Voyages perhaps, that will be thrown aside, by the first

first incredulous Person, as a Lye, and read by the Serious and the Thoughtful, with such Reflections, as the Pride of the Monarch would little approve. It must be considered too as subject to hourly Revolutions: besides, that all the State of an Eastern Monarch is incapable of affording the least Relish, to one, who has been used to the Refinements of Life, in more humanized Nations.

The highest Gratitude must surely be raised in us, by such Comparisons as these, when we reflect, that those moral and civil Improvements, which seem to set our little Corner of the Globe, so far above the rest, that, like that Mountain, which the Siamese imagine to stand on those Gems, in the Midst of the Earth, the Sun and Moon, seem to have their Revolutions only round that, cheering and enlightening it with their warmest Beams.

Such an extensive View of human Kind, as this, leads likewise to a general Benevolence,

nevolence, dilates and enlarges the Heart, as well as the Imagination. Where we behold a cultivated Spot of Land, the Eye dwells on it with Pleasure: And when we see nothing but wild and barren Deserts around us, we wish, that they could be improved into the same smiling Scene. We learn to look on the Savage Indian, as our Fellow-Creature, who has a Mind as capable of every exalted Satisfaction, as ours: and therefore we pity him for the Want of those Enjoyments, on which we pride ourselves. From compassionate Thoughts kind Actions naturally flow: our Endeavours will, in some Degree, follow our Wish, wherever it is sincere: and would we all join our Endeavours to do all the Good we are able, this Earth would soon become a Subject of such delightful Contemplation, as should make us reflect, with infinite Delight, upon the Study, that had first led us into so useful a Train of Thoughts.

E S S A Y XV.

IT is very strange, and not less grievous, that almost all People should have such an Inequality in their Conduct, as in ten thousand unheeded Instances, daily to contradict those fundamental Principles of Duty and Reason, which, in Matters of more acknowledged Importance, they justly make it their Glory to act up to.

The Person who goes contrary to those Principles, upon deliberate Reflection, we all shun and detest: and is mere Heedlessness so great a Virtue, as to atone for our behaving, in the same faulty Way, because we do it, without making so deep Reflection, as we ought ?

A few Instances may explain what I mean, and I believe, there are few Persons, who will not find something of the same Sort, at home, within themselves.

Good Nature is a Quality, that People are as fond of possessing as any. — Does it ever hold, throughout? That Pain, which we should abhor to inflict on the Body of a Friend, or a Dependent, do we never suffer our Caprice or Humour to inflict it, on their *Mind*, an infinitely tenderer Part? — That Resentment and Dislike, which we are strongly upon our Guard against feeling, in Return for real Injuries, and should justly reckon ourselves very bad Christians if we did otherwise, do we never make them the Punishment of trivial Offences, and slight Disagreeablenesses, in those to whom, perhaps, we have solid Obligations? At the same Time that we should desire, in Cases of Importance, to do all our Fellow-Creatures all possible Good, do we seriously enough consider that the repeating an idle Story, or spreading upon slight

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Grounds,

Grounds, a disagreeable Report, is acting most directly contrary to those laudable Desires? We can *actually* do Good but to few: but we ought to wish it as sincerely and as warmly to all, as if they were truly within the small Circle of our own Influence: and consequently, a Mind, that is as good as it should be, will feel itself heartily interested in every Interest of our Fellow-Creatures. Should we then listen with Complacency, or even with careless Ears, to the Story of such Faults, Frailties and Follies, as are real Misfortunes to them?

Patience and Resignation are what, in the severest Trials, we should earnestly wish to be distinguished for. Do we practise them on trifling Occasions? Let every one of us be asked—Can you bear to be put out of your own Way, to accommodate your Humour to the Varieties of human Life, and however your Day is turned and interrupted, cheerfully make the best of it? Can you improve little Inconveniencies
into

into something tolerable and even useful? It may generally be done if People would but set their Minds to it.

You are convinced, perhaps, that a cheerful, grateful Disposition is that, which above all others, ought to be cultivated by Creatures formed for immortal Happiness, guided in their Way to it, by the most gracious Providence, and continually under the Eye, and Care of the most excellent and amiable of Beings. But do you always act, and think, and speak consistently with this Persuasion? Is none of your Breath wasted in vain Sighs? Do you never voluntarily indulge the Overflowings of a fruitless Sorrow? Do you never, by giving Way to a momentary Disgust, Resentment or Peevishness, rob yourself of that highest Delight, which flows from perfect Kindness and good Humour? Do you never encourage disagreeable Thoughts and jarring Passions to disorder the Harmony of your Soul, and make you tasteless to all the Joys of Life, and to all the

Charms of beautiful Nature? Do you never nourish a fond and blameable Anxiety—never heap Times and Circumstances of Trouble and Sorrow in your Mind, till the Load grows too heavy for Imagination to bear? Do you never please yourself with heightening the Paintings of your Distress? Do you often recollect all the happy and delightful Circumstances of your Situation? No State is without very many, and those very important.

Again: you are generous, it may be, free and open-hearted: your Dispositions are all noble and liberal: your Bounty would be inexhaustible if your Estate was so: you would do Good to all the World: no Eye should see you, that could not “bear Witness” to your Kindness. But in the free Indulgence of this amiable Temper, how possible is it, that you may injure those whom you are the most bound to help? If proper Regard to the Limits of your Power be not observed, this Dignity and Generosity must be supported by
the

the cruelest Injustice, and the most wretched Condescensions. To what Straits, what Meannesses are those often reduced, whom Fortune had once placed in a high Rank! From what proceeds this, but from Inequality of Conduct!

The elegant Beauty, whose fondest Aim is to please and to be admired, has sometimes small Regard to that complete Harmony of Manner and Behaviour, which perfects the Charm. Indeed we are, all of us, so short-sighted, that to take in a whole View at once, is impossible. Yet these Views of Life we ought surely to chuse and study, with at least as much Taste and Attention, as a Landscape Painter does Prospects. The most considerable Objects should take up the chief Place, and be finished with the highest Art. The rest should be thrown off, in due Proportion, and lessening by imperceptible Degrees. But what a Picture would he make, were the distant Hills to be painted of a vivid green, and the nearest Objects softened

into a purplish blue: here, every Flower touched up with exquisite Art; and these Objects as near, and more considerable, sketched only with rude Out-lines?—Inconsistent throughout, we are seriously offended at the Disproportion of any Work of Art, and utterly insensible of it in a thousand Instances, where, to the Eye of Reason, it is infinitely more monstrous.

E S S A Y XVI.

ONE great Reason why People succeed so little in the Art of pleasing, while they seem wholly possess'd by the Ambition of shining, is their not observing proper Rules of Place and Time. They shine, indeed, in their own Eyes extremely: but they do not suit their Manners to the Taste of those, with whom they converse. Whatever is their favourite and superior Accomplishment, they are apt to imagine a sufficient Recommendation; wherever they go: when probably there are a thousand less striking, which properly placed, would make them appear, with infinitely more Advantages. Nor is even the favourite Accomplishment by this Means lost; for when once you have condescended to win People's Esteem, in their own Way, they

are willing enough to see every additional Grace in your Character, and dwell upon it with Pleasure.

To instance only in the Character of the fine Lady. Struck with the Praise of Beauty, and conscious of such a superior Claim to Admiration, the absolute fine Lady will be such through every Scene of Life, and in every Variety of Circumstances. But after all, what Good is it to the industrious Tradesman, that, after many a Morning's Attendance, he can see her Ladyship with a Pair of fine Eyes? It is not Beauty, Wit, or Learning, that pass for current Coin, in our Dealings with People who live by their Business. Punctuality and Exactness, with a strict Care to save them as much Time and Labour as we possibly can, is the least we owe them, for the Pains they voluntarily take to furnish us with every Convenience of Life.

This is meant for a rambling Sort of Essay: and now I have named Punctuality,

I cannot help digressing, to praise it. There is nothing that makes us more welcome Members of Society. Exactness, even in Trifles, amounts in a long Life, to a considerable Sum of Merit. People know how to depend upon us, and are sure, we shall never give them the least Uneasiness or Disappointment if we can possibly help it. This makes them the more easily bear with us, on Occasions more important, where Interests will sometimes very innocently interfere: and it is a Piece of true Policy never to forfeit that Credit, in small Things, which we may possibly want, in great ones. There are numberless little Arts of ingratiating ourselves, with our Fellow-Creatures, which are equally consistent with Sincerity and Prudence; nor was ever any Thing more wise and humane than the Apostle's Precept of "becoming all Things to all Men." Little Disobligations will be perpetually occurring, if we allow ourselves any Liberty, in Point of Exactness; the even Tenor of our Conduct is broken,

and People begin to think themselves indebted more to Chance than to us, for any Civility or Kindness we may show them.

There is a Kind of shatter-witted amiable Character, which gains no Confidence, and loses all Respect. I think I never saw any particular Description of it, and it may not be amiss to draw one here. It is a careless, gay, good humoured Creature, as full of Liveliness and Entertainment, as void of Caution and Discretion, living on from Moment to Moment, without meaning any Harm, or ever taking thorough Pains to do Good. In such Persons, fifty good Qualities are lost, in the mere Hurry of Inconsideration. Every Thing goes on at Random: every Thing is unequal and odd, and yet every Body loves them. Their Affairs for the most Part run to Ruin without any Extravagance: nay by Starts, they will be the best Managers, and the strictest Oeconomists in the World, but

but alas this is all the while, only Whimsy
masquerading in the Dress of a Housewife.

They who come under this Description, whatever their Principles may be, are guided in all the common Affairs of Life by mere Humour and Frolick. They run, with the prettiest Harmlessness in the World, into Acts of Injustice, that make all around them suffer severely, while they themselves are perfectly insensible whence the Mischief comes, because they are conscious to their own Hearts, of having the best Designs and Sentiments imaginable. By all I could ever learn, the great and amiable Sir R. S. was one of these whimsical, unhappy Mortals. With a Genius and a Heart, that few have ever equalled, he had this Defect in Conduct, to such a Degree as made him, in every Respect, but that of an Author, as hurtful a Member of Society as well could be. Wit like his turned his very Distresses into Entertainment, and it is hard to say, whether he raised in his Acquaintance, more Love,

Diversion, or Compassion. But what Pity it is, that such a Mind should have had any Blemish at all!

My Disposition has led me a great Way: But when a favourite Subject is fairly thrown before one, who can resist it? Not Gravity and Decorum itself. I remember a Story of a good old Lady, who used pretty equally to divide her Time, between the Church and the Quadrille-Table. A young Man of some Humour, and of more Smartness than Discretion, had laid a Wager, that he would make her talk over her Cards in Prayer Time. He contrived, the next Day to kneel down by her; and when the Litany began, whispered in a low Voice— I had the terriblest Luck last Night! No Mortal was ever so unfortunate.—Hush: be quiet Sir, pray have done.—Madam, you shall but hear me.—Pray Sir, fie, by no Means, pray be gone, for Goodness sake.—I had four Matadores: and so on he went telling his Hand, and the whole Process of the Game: while she, poor Woman,

Woman, was very seriously angry, and, as she thought, perfectly inattentive to him. He goes on however.—A Club was led, I put on a small Trump.—Human Patience could endure no longer. Pooh, says the good Lady, you should have played your Ponto..

E S S A Y XVII.

THE Stedfastness of a Rock, the Immoveableness of a Center, the Firmness of a deep Foundation, a Pillar of Adamant, an everlasting Anchor, such to the fluctuating Mind of Man is a well-grounded Confidence. Without it, all his Thoughts are lighter than the Leaves in Autumn, the Sport of every momentary Hurricane. His Opinions are changeable by every varying Circumstance: every Mote in a Sun Beam suggests some new Fancy: he hopes and fears, dislikes and loves, doubts To-day, trusts To-morrow, accuses himself of Credulity the next, then again grows inadvertent, and never lets his busy disquieted Imagination rest. His Reason, one Hour, convinced by weighty Arguments, has no Impression left of them, another:

another: but, suspecting Judgment to be in Fault, when only Memory is blameable, frankly gives itself up to the next contrary System, and so on *ad Infinitum*.

In the Intercourse of Life, this fatal Diffidence insensibly alienates the dearest Friends, breaks the kind Bonds of mutual Trust, or dissolves them, by scarce perceptible Insinuations. It particularly oppresses weak Spirits: and challenges all the Knight-Errantry of Reason, to free them from the Power of this wicked Enchanter. It is indeed in his inforcelated Palace, that, like the People in Ariosto, Friends and Lovers, deceived by false Appearances of one another, are perpetually wearied in a vain Pursuit, and groan under a thousand imagined Slights and Injuries, of which all are equally guileless; and never gain an Explanation to rectify the miserable Error. A Hero, who lately, perhaps, appeared crowned with Laurels, is now, on the sudden, transformed into a Monster. Credulous

ious Minds! that do not know that the Laurel of some Virtues, is so absolute a Security against all groffer Fallings, that their Eyes must deceive them whenever they represent such a Metamorphosis.

But Judgments are usually formed, more from particular Instances, than from general Rules: and hence it is, that they are so contradictory. Every fresh glaring Appearance is believed, against the most absolute Evidence, that past Experience can furnish; and by mere following our Noses, we miss the great Land-marks, that should direct our Journey.

But to grow more methodical: This Paper is of too mixed a Nature, to allow the dwelling seriously on that religious Confidence, which is the Ground of all the rest, and of every assured Satisfaction in Life, or Support at the Close of it. This is the inexhaustible, eternal Source of Cheerfulness, Patience and Courage: of that

that true undaunted Fortitude, that inspires the real Hero,

Who asks no Omen, but his Country's Cause.

Distrust and Danger vanish at its Radiance :
Constancy and indefatigable Perseverance
crown it with the noblest Success, and with
immortal Honour. Even the Weakness
of constitutional Cowardice may be relieved
by it, from a thousand anxious Fears :
and raised, upon any extraordinary Oc-
casion, into an absolute Disregard of all
those unreal Evils, which so swell the sick-
ly List of Apprehension.

In Friendship, a mutual Confidence is
of so absolute Necessity, that it is scarcely
possible it should subsist, for any Time,
without it. When once upon Reason,
and Experience, we have given Persons an
allowed Title to our Esteem, it is the
highest Injury both to them, and to our-
selves, to remove it upon less than an en-
tire Certainty : and there are some Degrees
of

of Esteem, that ought to outweigh the very strongest Appearances. In such Cases we should misdoubt all Judgments of our own, rather than suspect the Fidelity of a tried Friend: and never give it up till we have allowed them the fullest Opportunity for vindicating themselves, if Appearances have injured them. By this Means, nothing will remain perplexed or uneasy upon the anxious Mind, but every Thing will be fair, and clear, and honest.

When Truth is presupposed as the Foundation, this Dependence follows of Course, even when the Circumstances do not admit of a present Explanation.—
 “Appearances would give me Reason to
 “be uneasy at your Behaviour, if Friend-
 “ship did not forbid my suspecting you.”
 —“It is very true: and I cannot yet
 “explain those Appearances.”—What
 a World of Trouble, and Distrust, would
 such short Explanations avoid.

There are few Things, which have more
 struck my Imagination, than the meek
 Answer

ESSAY XVII. 141

Answer of Balaam's Ass, when his Master unreasonably corrected him, for what had only the Appearance of a Fault, and was, in Reality, the highest Instance of Duty and Care. In which, after having received a very passionate Return to a very gentle Expostulation, she only replies,—“ Was I ever wont to do so unto thee?”

ESSAY

E S S A Y XVIII.

THE only unshaken Basis of Friend-
ship is Religion. True Friendship is
a Union of Interests, Inclinations, Senti-
ments. Where these greatly clash, there
may indeed, be outward Civility, but there
can be nothing more.—What then becomes
of all those fair Ideas, and many fair His-
tories too, of generous Friendship sacri-
ficing every Interest of its own? What
becomes of that worthiest Complaisance
that bends disagreeing Humours into per-
fect Sympathy? What becomes of that
powerful Affection, that makes often so
thorough a Change in the Sentiments and
Tempers of Persons? All these may con-
sist with a Maxim appearing so contrary:
for few People look so deep as the real
and solid Foundation of all, but take those

for important Interests and essential Points, which indeed are but a temporary Super-structure, liable to perpetual Alterations.

Whoever to the Faith and Constancy of Friendship sacrifices the Interests of Fortune, or the Indulgence of Inclination, pursues still his true and essential Interests: since he is strictly performing an important Duty. However the Opinion of the Good may differ, in a thousand Things, in this they agree, that there "is one Thing needful," and that in all lesser Points, Candour, Complaisance, and good Nature are the Temper of Mind it requires.

Agreed in this, their Inclinations, their Pleasures, their Pursuits, in all that is important, must be the same. What Openness of Heart, what Harmony of Sentiments, what Sweetness of mutual Conversation must be the Consequence.

Truth, perfectly clear, and undisguised, Constancy unchangeable through all the Varieties

Varieties of Humour and Circumstances, the kindest Affection, and the most winning Manners flow almost naturally from this Source of every good Disposition. This infallible Rule is a sure Guard against all those Errors and Extremes which the best Affections are liable to run into. It makes particular Friendships keep within such Bounds, as not to interfere with general Charity and universal Justice. It teaches to distinguish between those Errors and Frailties of human Nature, which in true Friendship must be absolutely past over, and those contagious Faults which necessarily dissolve it. It heightens the Delights of happy Friendship, while it teaches us to look upon our Friends, as Blessings indulged to us, by the All-Giver: and it provides the only Balm, that can heal the Wounds of Friendship cut short by Death. It softens every kind Anxiety, we can feel for those we love, and must feel frequently in a World so full of varied Distresses; by bidding us look up to the almighty Friend and Father of all, "who
 " careth

"careth for all alike," and trust in him, to give them that Assistance and Relief, of which we, poor helpless Creatures, can at best be but very poor Instruments. To Him we can pour out the affectionate Fullness of our Hearts, when overwhelmed with a tender Concern for their Welfare: and may rest assured, that he will guide and prosper our sincere Endeavours for their real Good.

When the Heart has long been used to the delightful Society of beloved Friends, how dreadful is Absence, and how irksome, Solitude. But these Phantoms of Absence and Solitude vanish before the Sunshine of Religion. Every Change of Life, every Variety of Place, allotted us by an all-ruling Providence, grows welcome to us; and while we consider ourselves and our Friends, however distant, as equally under the Care and Protection of the same gracious and omnipresent Being, our common Creator, Redeemer and Preserver, the Distance between us, with all its

Terrors, is annihilated: while Solitude and Retirement give us but the Opportunity for a wider Range of Thought on Subjects, that ennoble Friendship itself. Then may our Minds look forward, through an endless Succession of Ages, in which the Spirits of just Men made perfect, renewing in a happier World the affectionate Engagements, just begun, as it were, in the Days of their Mortality, shall rejoice in one anothers continually improving Happiness and Goodness, to all Eternity. Blessed Mansions, where we shall meet again, all those beloved Persons whose Remembrance is so dear to us! Our Friendship shall then, probably, be extended through the whole Society of the Blest. Every one amiable, every one benevolent, how can it be otherwise? The excellent, of all Ages and Nations, shall then be numbered among our Friends. Angels themselves will not disdain to admit us to their Friendship. Beyond all these Glories, we may still raise our Thoughts to the supreme Friend

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Friend and Father, till they are lost in the dazzling, but delightful Contemplation.

When so fair a Superstructure rises from so firm a Basis, who but would build their Friendship on this everlasting Rock? But alas the slight Connections of the trifling World, are but like those wooden Buildings raised suddenly for pompous Festivals, adorned with every Elegance and Splendor for a Day, and with all the Mimickry of marble Pillars, and the most solid Architecture. The least Accident destroys them at once: and a very short Time, of Course, sees the Spot, where they were erected, forlorn and bare.

E S S A Y XIX.

I Do not much love the Tribe of dreaming Writers. There is something very unnatural in supposing such Products of Understanding, such a regular Series of Ideas, generally abstruse and allegorical enough to put the Comprehension of a waking Reader upon the Stretch, to be the Effects of wild Imagination, at those Hours when she is most unassisted by Reason and Memory. Yet it is pity a lively Fancy should be balked, and confined to the dull Road of Essay-writing, merely to avoid such a trifling Absurdity in the Phrase. It might certainly be changed with great Propriety into that of a *Reverie*, which, by People that indulge their Imaginations, is often carried on a very considerable Time, with as gay a Variety of Circumstances,
and

and as lively Colouring, as the Poppy-dipt Pencil of Morpheus could ever produce. Be it allowed me then to say, that one Afternoon this Summer, I fell into a deep *Reverie*, lulled by the Whispering of Groves, the soft Descent of a refreshing Shower, and the musical Repetitions of a Thrush. The Air around me was perfumed with Jessamins and Woodbinds, and I found myself perfectly in a poetical Situation. The Volume I had in my Hand should of right, to be sure, have been Ovid or Petrarch, but it was Sunday, and the genteel Reader must excuse me if I own that it contained the Book of Ecclesiastes.

The soothing Scene about me had at length suspended my Reading; but my Thoughts were still filled with many beautiful Images of the Nothingness and Vanity of Human Life. There is something so bounded, and so shadowy in our Existence, that the celestial Beam of Understanding which shows us what it is, must

give us almost a Disgust of Life itself, were not our Affections attached to it by so many tender Ties, as call back our proud Thoughts every Moment. Most miserable State, continued I, in a melancholy Soliloquy, what Wretchednesses are we conversant in, to what mean Objects are we bound down, how little a Way can we see round us, how much less can we comprehend, through what a Wild of Errors lies the narrow Path of Truth! Narrow and long!—Long? Why then it is not methinks so strange, that one should not step to the End of it at once. Well, suffice it that our Progress be gradual.—But what a thick dark Hedge is here on either Side. How much pleasanter would it be to break through it, and view the fair Varieties of the Universe as we pass along. Suppose it quite away.—In the Midst of this vast trackless Plain how will you now distinguish your Path?—This Brink of a Precipice that you are to pass along, does not your Head turn at it? Do not you wish again for your safe Boundary?—Well, but here
the

the Path is safe and open.—Amuse yourself, look round you.—I do not like my own Path. Yonder is one much fairer, passing over a much nobler Eminence. I like my own Path less than ever. I do not yet see far enough.—O thou Spirit of Disorder and Confusion, canst thou not be contented to move in the Way allotted thee? Deviate then into Ruin. Many a winding Walk presents itself on each Hand. Art thou willing to venture?—No, let us pursue this safer, vulgar Path. Must we have Dirt and cloudy Weather too?—You must. It belongs to this Portion of the Universe. This Rain that displeases you here, is nourishing sweet Herbs and delicious Fruits, that will refresh you a few Furlongs hence. Behold now the Advantage of these despicable Things you are hedged in with. These Thorns that sometimes pull you back, are often crowned with gay and fragrant Blossoms, to make the tedious Journey seem less irksome. These thick Trees, that bar your wandering View, are drest in a soft

Verdure that relieves your Eye, and enables it sometimes to take a better Glimpse through the Branches, on Objects that it could not dwell upon, till it becomes stronger.—Beneath a Cypress lay a gloomy Philosopher, who called out in a dismal Tone, whoever you are, foolish Passengers, know your own Misery. It is impossible to have any rational Enjoyment, in this your despicable State. Banish the Thought of Comfort. You are a Parcel of Wretches, to be happy is none of your Business, to be cheerful is an Absurdity. These Blossoms are transient as the Spring, those vile Fruits you gather as you pass along, ought not to detain your Attention one Moment, from those Gems that glitter on your Heads, which are your only real Treasure. Those wretched Fruits what are they?—They are what support us from one Stage to another said a plain Man, who past by, and our Stock of Gems is gradually increasing, if we keep but steadily in the right Path, and gently and patiently remove the Thorns and Briars, that molest us,

us, as we move towards the Country of Diamonds.—Immediately my *Reverie* transported me into a Fair. Long Streets of Booths crossing each other at right Angles formed very regular Squares, of which some were handsome and some very ugly, from the different Structures of the Booths. Several Market-Women were carrying away Bundles and Baskets marked with the Names of the various Proprietors. I met a Hag of a very untoward Look, bent almost double with the Weight of Years, her Brow wrinkled, and her Complexion Weather-beaten. The Sight of her displeased me, but she was not to be avoided. Here, said she, offering me a filthy Basket, covered at the Top with Thorns, take your Purchase, and make much of it. My Purchase, said I, stepping back: Nay, said she, e'en take it, and flung it at my Head! But as she turned away, a Smile that began to brighten on her solemn Face, discovered to me that she was the good Fairy *Experience*. I sat down with the Encourage-

ment this Discovery gave me, and began to examine her Basket. The Thorns it was covered with cost me a good deal of Time to disentangle, and take them out with Safety to my Fingers, but I recollected them distinctly every one to be such as had perplexed me and torn my Clothes, as I past along the narrow Path, and which one by one I had gently broken off the Boughs while I pursued my Journey. These were the very individual Thorns and Briars, and while I was wondering how they should come to be so collected, I came to the Bottom where I found a Row of inestimable Pearls, equal in number to the Briars, large, even, round, and of an exquisite Polish. Beside them lay a Scrip of Paper with these Words written on it.

“ Philosophy and Evenness of Temper
 “ are Pearls, which we purchase at the
 “ Price of those Vexations and Crosses in
 “ Life, that occur to us every Day. No-
 “ thing in this World is to be had for no-
 “ thing. Every Difficulty we surmount

“ is.

“ is the Purchase of some Advantage.

“ Go through the Fair, and see.”

I perceived a good Genius standing near me, and desired him to be my Cicerone. We went through the Booths and examined the Purchases. Here the Coin paid down for Health and Ease, and Freedom from Perplexity, was stamped with Care and Prudence. There, the Copper Money of mere plodding Perseverance was the Price of Wealth, Honour, Learning and Accomplishments. In one Place there was a Sort of Monmouth-Street, where People were bartering old bad Habits for new ones; every Way more becoming, but seemed to think their Bargains very hard, and the very Article of fitting them on, occasioned such a Variety of wry Faces, as would have given great Diversion to a Grotesque Painter. It was a melancholy Amusement to see how People mistook in the Value they set upon Things, how often they passed by, with a slighting Air, those Goods which at first they might have had

for a Trifle, and never knew the Worth of them, till they were engaged to other Bidders, or the Price raised very high, or themselves perhaps gone so far off before they took the Fancy of returning, that they could not find their Way back without a Guide; and in the whole Place there was but one Guide to be met with, and she of so forbidding an Aspect, and so disagreeable a Conversation as made her a very undesirable Companion. She severely reprov'd their Folly, and oblig'd them to throw away the Bargains, on which they had most set their Heart, and then led them back to the Fair, by a rough, round about Way, to buy those they had formerly slighted. By the Time they had got there, she began to wear a gentler Aspect, and they found so much Advantage in the Change of their Purchases, that notwithstanding all her rude Treatment, they acknowledged *Repentance* as a very useful Friend.

Leisure, I found, was a Metal that proved more or less valuable according to the Image stamped upon it, and as I saw what admirable Curiosities it purchased in the Hands of good Managers, I was quite provoked to see what Quantities of it were flung away: but this was nothing. I saw many fine People throw away Handfuls of Diamonds, that they might have their Fingers at Liberty to catch Butterflies.

In some Parts of the Fair, every Body seemed to be playing at cross Purposes. The most valuable Gems were squandered away for Trifles, which yet they could not purchase, and Trifles offered for Jewels of the highest Price. I saw my Friend Fosco, the Antiquarian, among a Multitude of the same Class, who brought such a Quantity of Time and Industry, as would have purchased any Thing in the whole Place, and poured it out before a Cabinet of Copper Coins, which, still after all, wanted one or two of being perfect. I saw others of gayer Appearance buy a Shadow, a Flower,
a Fea-

a Feather, at still a higher Price.—At last, to my infinite Vexation, a less shadowy Figure stood before me, and a Summons to attend some Visitors that were just alighted, put an End to my *Reverie*.

E S S A Y XX.

THERE is a Magnificence in Nature, like that of some sumptuous Feast. The Objects of our Enjoyment are multiplied infinitely beyond our Capacities of enjoying: and there is something, in the human Mind, perpetually dissatisfied with its present Advantages, because it cannot take in every Thing, at once. Like silly Children, possessed of all within our Reach, we cry for all we see.

The Desires of our Nature so vast, and its Capacities so bounded, are Demonstrations of a Being in its Infancy here, and to be perfected hereafter. But having traced this uneasy Sentiment, this perpetual Craving to its natural Source, we should from thence learn to suspend its Force, during
our

our present State; and when once we know at what Sort of Enjoyments we can arrive, and how vainly we strive to go further, sit down contented with our Lot, and try to make the best of it. Were this done, as it should be, Spleen would lose half its Empire in the World. We should not be much mortified at finding ourselves tied down for a while, to such childish Amusements, because we should consider, that our Existence has a nobler Aim, a higher End in View. In the mean Time, till that can be attained, we shall welcome every small Satisfaction, with a cheerful Countenance, and never be too proud to be pleased.

I cannot help looking upon *Pleasure* as a real, and amiable Being, and blessing the Author of Nature, who has created this Charmer to lead Man on towards final Happiness through, as Shakespear calls it, this Worky-day World. The soft Enchantress waves her Wand, and all Nature appears drest in Smiles and Elegance. Sweet
Smells,

Smells, gay Colours, musical Notes, are diffused through the whole Globe. Every Thing is beautiful in its Season. All we have to do, is to open our Minds to so rich a Variety of delightful Impressions : to accommodate ourselves with Joy and Thankfulness to the present Scene, whatever it is, and to make the most of that Good, which every Thing has in it. To a free Mind all is agreeable : but violent Attachments to any particular Objects narrow the Soul, and lessen its Capacity for Enjoyment.

The first Care to be taken is, to keep our Minds so loose and disengaged from the World, that setting, as far as possible, the true Value upon every Thing in it, and no more, we may enjoy all the Satisfaction it can possibly afford us, and avoid those Anxieties, which misplaced Affections create. Violent Partialities, must have violent Antipathies to balance them : Those who set up to themselves Idols to worship, will, at the same Time raise to themselves

Hob.

Hob-goblins, to fear. We can seldom find in our Hearts to exalt one Character, without depressing another: and we must generally have an Object of Ridicule and Dislike, as well as one of Esteem, and Admiration. Nay I am afraid, there are more People, who amuse themselves with seeing every Thing in a burlesque and disagreeable Light, than of such, as will take the Pains to be pleased with an amiable View of this fair World. We are most ingenious to find out what is wanting or amiss in our Situations: but how ready to overlook the other Side! What Complaints of the scorching Heat of Summer, the pinching Cold of Winter! For some People, no Day is good enough, no Place without its Faults, no Company without its Failings. Alas, alas! as if it were any Thing new or unexpected, that this World should be, in many Things deficient: as if it were a Proof of Genius to discover, what it is a much better Proof of good Sense to pass over, and as if it needed quick Eyes to discern the Flaws in this rough

rough Cast of a Globe. Who could ever expect it to be all made of solid Pearl, and polished to the highest Lustre? Yet such as it is, if we make the best of it, we shall enjoy no small Degree of Happiness.

There is in every Thing, a Charm, a Good, that we have Capacities to taste, if we would use them. The enthusiastic Language of Poetry alone, is fitted to describe the Bloom of Nature, in a Country Scene. One Breath of vernal Air diffuses Serenity and Joy, through the Soul. The Music of the Woods, tunes every Thought to Harmony. The clear Height of the Firmament, and the bright Blueness of the Æther, is Transport to the Eye, and Gladness to the Heart. While the Sight wanders through the gay Expanse, the Mind rises to the noblest Contemplations, and our Thoughts expatiate upon future Scenes of fair Existence, in Worlds all of Harmony and Beauty.

But,

But, to give us a just View of our Capacities for Pleasure, and sure this is a Rent-roll well worth looking over, we may consider what Joy almost every Kind of Object affords to some Set of Men or other, and resolve out of Duty and Prudence to draw some Degree of that Satisfaction from them, which these do from Inclination, or acquired Partiality: at least not to overlook, with Contempt, or regard with Aversion, whatever is not contrary to Innocence or Reason. See but how delighted the Florist and Botanist are with those Blossoms and Herbs, which the rest of Mankind tread carelessly under Foot. Observe the Astronomer, with what Transport he views those clear Stars, which the Mortal of Business, or the Butterfly of Amusement, scarce ever find Leisure to look up to. Mind the Painter, who sees all Things in a picturesque View, how charmed he is with the blended Lights and Shades, in every Landscape. Nothing escapes him; each Figure has an Attitude, an Air, something graceful or grotesque:
and

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and so far is not ridiculous. Every Kind of Virtuoso has his darling Attention, and each one is the Source of some Pleasure, unknown to the rest of the World. Why may not we share in them all? What a Veneration has the Antiquary for Dust and Mould? How pleased is the Collector of Rarities, with Moths and Shells, nay, with what many of us should look upon as the Refuse and Deformities of Nature. These good People as much as they despise one another, have, all of them, Reason on their Side, as far as it will carry them. But when attached to one particular Thing, we indulge our Fondness to an Extravagance, then Ridicule comes in, with a just Reproof. But this belongs only to the Degree, to the immoderate Fondness; for in some Measure, every Thing deserves a pleased Attention. The Flower, the Butterfly, the Shell has exquisite Beauty: the Herb, invaluable Use. Every Species of Learning is an Improvement to human Nature: and those, of which the Use is not obvious, may tend, perhaps, to important

tant Discoveries yet unthought of. Antiquity is truly venerable, its Simplicity amiable, its Annals instructive. Modern Refinements have their Merit. The most trifling Gaieties of social Life exhilarate the Heart, and polish the Manners. One might as fairly number the Sands on the Sea Shore, as reckon up the Multitude of Things, that may afford a wise and reasonable Pleasure. Were our Lives here stretched out, to some thousands of Years, we might still be learning or enjoying something new. Yet this Consideration does not make long Life at all desirable, since our Advantages in another State will be superior to all, that our best Improvements can help us to acquire in this.

E S S A Y XXI.

HOW vain, and how vexatious is the Flutter of the World! Even I, who am sufficiently sensible, perhaps too much so, to its Pleasures and Amusements, can find, after a little while, my Spirits quite worn out by them, and learn from a frequent Experience, that Reflection of the most serious Sort, is the only true and lasting Source of Cheerfulness.

As most of our Affections here take their deepest Tinge from the Workings of Imagination, so there are perhaps scarce any, that will maintain their terrifying Shapes against the calm Efforts of Reason: but, when amidst the Hurry of a mixed and varied Scene, we give them only now
and

and then a transitory Glance, these airy Phantoms cast a Gloom and Horror over our whole Lives. It is then, that Poverty and Pain, and Sickness, Disgrace and Disappointment, nay Satiety itself, strike upon our unguarded Fancies, in the most dreadful Manner. Our Hearts are filled with Sorrow, and poured out in ungrateful Complaining. Cool Reflection alone can disdain these Bugbears of the Mind: and to one who comprehends, so far as our bounded Understandings can comprehend, the universal Scheme of Providence, few of its particular Dispensations will appear severe, while every present Suffering is overbalanced by a glorious Futurity.

How naturally the Contemplation of what is most melancholy, leads to the most enlivening Hopes, may be seen in some Verses, which I will insert here, and which flowed from a natural Chain of Thoughts from the trifling, but gloomy Incident of a Bell tolling at Midnight.

Hark!

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Hark! with what solemn Toll the Midnight Bell
Summons Reflection to her dusky Cell:

With leaden Sound it dully strikes the Ear,
Bids Horror wake, and careless Fancy hear;
Chill'd Fancy hears with awful Gloom oppress'd
Thus by the deep-felt, wordless Voice address.

Wake Mortal! Wake from Pleasure's golden
Dream,

The present gay Pursuit, the future Scheme;
The vain Regret of Hours for ever past,
The vain Delight in Joys not made to last:
The vainer prying into future Days,
Since, ere To-morrow's Sun exerts its Rays,
My Toll may speak them vain to thee. Thy Fears,
Thy Hopes, thy Wishes vain, and vain thy Tears.
What then to Thee, whose folded Limbs shall rest
In the dark Bosom of the fabled Chest,
What will it then import to Thee, if Fame,
With flatt'ring Accents, dwells upon thy Name,
Or spurns thy Dust, or if, thy mould'ring Form
Safe from Life's dang'rous Calm, or dreadful Storm,
Sleeps in the Concave of a well-turn'd Tomb
By Marble Cupids mourn'd, amid the Gloom
Of some old Abbey venerably rude
In Gothic Pride: or in some Solitude

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Beneath the spreading Hawthorn's flow'ry Shade,
Crown'd with fresh Grass and waving Fern is laid :
Trode, in some public Path, by frequent Feet
Of passing Swains, or deck'd by Vi'lets sweet ;
Nameless, unheeded, till a future Day
Shall animate to Bliss the lifeless Clay.

Or whether gaily past thy festive Hours,
Bath'd in rich Oils, and crown'd with blooming
Flow'rs ;
Or pinch'd with Want, and pin'd with wasting
Care,
All Joys, all Grievs, alike forgotten there.
The Part well acted gracious Heav'n assign'd,
If of the King, the Warrior or the Hind,
It matters not : or whether deck'd the Scene,
With Pomp and Show, or humble, poor and mean.
The Colouring of Life's Picture fades away,
When to these Shades succeeds a clearer Day.
The Colouring partial Fortune blindly gave,
Debas'd the imperial Figure to a Slave.
In glitt'ring Robes, bade shapeless Monsters glow
And in a Crown conceal'd the servile Brow.
Perhaps false Lights on well drawn Figures thrown,
Scarce cautious Virtue would her Image own :
But when the Gloss of Titles, Wealth and Pow'r,
Of Youth's short Charm, and Beauty's fading Flow'r,

Be-

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Before Truth's dazzling Sun shall fade away,
 And the bare Out-Lines dare the piercing Ray,
 Then if the Pencil of thy Life has trac'd
 A noble Form, with full Proportion grac'd,
 A Model of that Image, Heav'n imprest
 In the first Thoughts of thy untainted Breast,
 Whate'er the Painting Fortune's Hand bestow'd,
 Whether in Crimson Folds thy Garments flow'd,
 Or Rags ungraceful o'er thy Limbs were thrown,
 Thy ev'ry Virtue overlook'd, unknown;
 An Eye all-judging, an all-pow'rful Hand
 The bounteous Pallet shall at length command,
 Reject the vicious Shape that shrinks away
 Stript of those Robes, that dress'd it once so gay.
 Excuse the imperfect Form, if well design'd,
 Where the weak Stroke betray'd the enlighten'd Mind;
 Grant ev'ry Ornament and ev'ry Aid
 On ev'ry Failing cast the proper Shade,
 And bid each smiling Virtue stand display'd;
 Improving ev'ry Part, with Skill divine
 Till the fair Piece in full Perfection shine.

E S S A Y XXII.

WHY is it that almost all Employments are so unsatisfactory, and that when one hath past a Day of common Life, in the best Way one can, it seems, upon Reflection, to be so mere a Blank? And what is the Conclusion to be drawn from so mortifying an Observation? Certainly not any Conclusion in Favour of Idleness: for Employment, as such, is a very valuable Thing. Let us have done ever so little, yet if we have done our best, we have the Merit of having been employed, and this moral Merit is the only Thing of Importance in human Life.

To complain of the Insignificancy of our Employments, is but another Name for repining at that Providence, which has appointed,

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appointed, to each of us, our Station: Let us but fill that well, to the utmost of our Power, and whatever it be, we shall find it to have Duties and Advantages enough.

But whence then, is this constant Dissatisfaction of the human Mind; this Restlessness, this perpetual Aim at something higher and better, than, in the present State, it ever can attain? Whence, but from its celestial Birth, its immortal Nature, framed for the noblest Pursuits and Attainments, and in due Time, to be restored to all this Dignity of Being, if it does but behave properly in its present Humiliation.

Be that as it will, there is something painful in this strong Sense of Worthlessness and Meanness, that must make People of Leisure and Reflection pass many an uneasy Hour. Perhaps there is nothing better fitted to wean us from Life: but in doing that, it by no Means ought to hinder us from Industry and Contentment.

Every Station, every Profession, every Trade has its proper Set of Employments, of which it is an indispensable Duty for every Person to inform themselves with Care, and to execute with Patience, Perseverance and Diligence. This Rule of Duty holds, from the Emperor to the Artisan: for though the Employments are different, the Duty, that enforces them, is the same, in all. Man is born to labour: it is the Condition of his Being; and the greatest cannot exempt themselves from it, without a Crime.

If we consider well, we shall find, that all Employments, in this transient Scene, come pretty much to the same Nothingness.—The Labours of those who were busy and bustling on this Globe, five or six hundred Years ago—what now remains of them, but the Merit, to the Persons themselves, of having been well employed. How many valuable Books, the Employment, and the worthy one, of whole Lives, have perished long ago, with the very
Name

Name of their Authors ! The strongest Monuments of human Art and Industry, Obelisks, Temples, Pyramids are mouldered into Dust, and the brittle Monuments of Female Diligence in Pye-Crust, are not more totally lost to the World. To found an Empire was enough to gain a Sort of Immortality : yet the Empires themselves have proved mortal.

There are certainly some Employments of a noble, and a happy Kind, but, in no Degree, answerable to our Ideas : for the best we can do, is most poor, whether we would improve ourselves, or do Good to our Fellow-Creatures, in Comparison of the Capacity of our Mind, in its original State ; which resembles some vast Roman Amphitheatre, that once contained Myriads of happy People within its ample Round : defaced and ruined it can now scarcely afford Shelter, from the sudden Storm, to a few silly Shepherds.

E S S A Y XXIII.

IT is too common, for Persons, who are perfectly convinced of the Duty of Patience and cheerful Resignation, under great and severe Trials, in which the Hand of Providence is plainly seen, to let themselves grow fretful and plaintive under little Vexations, and slight Disappointments: as if their Submission in one Case, gave them a Right to rebel in another. As if there was something meritorious in the greater Sufferings, that gave them a Claim to full Indulgence in every trifling Wish of their Heart: and accordingly they will set their Hearts most violently upon little Reliefs and Amusements, and complain and pity themselves grievously, if they are at any Time denied.

All

All this is building on a false Foundation. The same gracious Providence, that sends *real* Afflictions only for our Good, will, we may be absolutely sure, afford us such Supports and Reliefs under them, as are needful and fit: but it will not accommodate itself to our idle Humour.

To be happy, we must depend for our Happiness on Him alone, who is able to give it. We must not lean on human Props of any Kind: though when granted us, we may thankfully accept and make Use of them; but always with Caution not to lay so much Weight upon them, as that the Reed broken under our Hand, may go into it, and pierce it.

On the Loss of a Friend, we must not say, *this* and *that* Person, *this* and *that* Amusement shall be my Relief and Support. But—to Providence I must submit—Providence will support me in what Way it sees proper.—The Means on which I must depend, under *that*, are a careful

and cheerful Performance of, and an Acquiescence in whatever is my Duty. I must accommodate myself to all its Appointments : and be they Health or Languor, a dull, or an active and gay Life; a Society agreeable to my Fancy, or one that is not, or none at all ; if, I do but endeavour to keep up this right Disposition, and behave accordingly, nothing *ought* to make me melancholy, or unhappy, nothing *can*, nothing *shall*. Forward *beyond* this Life, in this Case, I not only *may*, but *ought* to look, with Joy and Hope, with Cheerfulness and Alacrity of Spirit. Forward *in* this Life, it is not only *painful*, but *faulty* to look either with Anxiety, or with self-flattering Schemes. Yet *on* this present Scene, from Day to Day, and *forward* so far as is necessary to the Duty of Prudence, I may look with a Smile of Content and Gratitude : for every Day has something, has innumerable Things, good and cheerful in it, if I know but how to make the best of it.

In a Change of Situation, think not like a Child, of the Toys you leave, and the Toys you shall find, to make you Amends for them. All Play-things are brittle. Think not, like a grazing Animal, that you have changed one Pasture for another: and shall graze on this, or that Herb here, with Delight: "The Herb withereth, the Flower fadeth" every where. But think, like a reasonable Creature.—This Change was appointed for me: Acquiescence is my Duty: Duty must be my Support. Yet I know, such is the Condescendence of infinite Goodness, that I shall have many a slighter Relief, and Agreeableness thrown in: but these are by the by: not to be reckoned on before-hand, nor to be grieved for, if they fail or intermit.

ESSAY XXIV.

WHAT are my Ideas of Happiness? Negative ones present themselves first. A Freedom from Guilt—from Self-dislike—from Fear—from Vexation—from Languor—from Pain—from Sorrow.

The Joy of early Youth and early Morning, that is, Vigour and Capacity for continual Improvement, and a long Space before one to exert them in, with a Variety of new and noble Objects.—But, alas, how am I fitted for this, who have acquired such strong Habits of loitering Indolence—lost all Power of Application.

Therefore Application, a *Habit* of it ought to be re-acquired, though the Objects

jects of it *here*, are looked upon with the Indifference, they so highly deserve.

The Approbation and Protection and Guidance of the Good, Wise, Amiable, and Great—How much have I undeservedly experienced of that, even here! But mixed with a Painfulness, and Degree of Suspicion, from feeling that *I* am nothing, and have no Claim to it: and that the best of *Them* are but a Degree above nothing: are fallible, and may be deceived, in me, or mislead me: are mortal, and must forsake me, and leave me.—But look higher, and there is a Power, that can make us what it will, and Goodness that wills our Happiness; and Wisdom, that can fully fit us for it: and Majesty and Amiability—no Expression can reach the Ideas, that fill the Soul, in this Contemplation and Hope. Total Solitude in the Enjoyment of Thoughts like these, seems, to me, high Happiness.—But the corruptible Body would soon press down the Mind: the exhausted Spirits would sink into
Wretch-

Wretchedness, and there would be a Self-reproach for the Neglect of social Duties. There will be Duration enough, for all, hereafter, and Strength for every various Exertion. There are some poor Pleasures here, which are only such, because the mortal Frame requires them, as it does Food, and Sleep. These are what one calls Relaxations, Amusements, Trifles, that unbend the Mind, and vary its Ideas agreeably. The Sight of gay Flowers or sunny Landscapes; the Song of Birds; the Sportings of innocent Imagination, in some trifling Book; the Gaieties of young Animals. I am very thankful for these, in their Season, but past the Moment when they are necessary, the Landscape soon fades, if seen by ones self alone: and the Book gives quite another kind of Delight, if read in a Society, that are equally pleased. The Amusement of Animals, is from seeing them happy, and all this tends to promote right Dispositions, as the Contemplation of beautiful Objects, and
sweet

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sweet Sounds raises the Mind to grateful Adoration.

The mortal Pleasure I can the least know how to lay out of my Ideas, is the sweet Forgetfulness of quiet and refreshing Sleep: a great Blessing *here*, but only *here* where there are Cares, and Fears and Follies to be forgot. But if not indulged beyond needful Refreshment, it ought, surely, while we are here, to be accepted with humble Thankfulness.

The Joys of Society are, of all others most mixed with Pain. Yet where all are perfect, and where all are happy, how sublime must they be! Alas my great, my continual Failure is in social Duties! Why? Because I am almost continually in Society. In Solitude, one has nothing to do, but to cherish good and pleasing Dispositions. In Society, at every unguarded Moment, bad and painful ones break out, and fill one with Shame, Remorse, and Vexation. Selfishness shows its ugly Head:
little

little Contradictions excite Vehemence of Temper, to put out its Claws : Talkativeness prates away the inestimable Hours, without Use or Pleasure. Even good Humour, and Easiness of Temper must be restrained and mortified, else they lead to criminal Negligence, and destructive Extravagance. The justest Affections must be regulated, else they tie down the Heart too much. On the contrary, Justice and Gratitude demand often, that our kindest Affections should be excited and exprest, where natural Temper and Inclination do not prompt them. We ought with the strictest Eye of Justice to distinguish Right and Wrong in Characters, and yet with the tenderest Charity to overlook, and compassionate ten thousand lesser Faults, and Disagreeablenesses.

In short, the Life of Society is the Life of constant, unremitting, Mortification, and Self-denial. It is this, that makes the only useful Hardship of the Cloister, not the Fastings, Hair-Cloths, Watchings, and Dis-

Disciplines. But it is really still harder in uncloistered Society. To keep the Mind in right Frame, amid ten thousand Interruptions: to be regular, and diligent, without the Possibility of any settled Plan: To spread Cheerfulness when one is not pleased: to support it in ones self, when others are dejected—and a sad Look, or a sad Word, from those I love sinks my Heart: as a good Word, and a Smile raises it instantaneously.

But far, far better than the cloistered Rules of Man's foolish and arbitrary Invention, the Life of Society, with all its Self-denials, is the Appointment of the Almighty. Every Individual, of human Society, is ennobled, and endeared by its Relation to Him. For the meanest of these, Christ died. Our Love to each other, to every one of each other, is the Proof required of our being his Disciples.

Selfishness therefore must be continually overcome, except where some real Harm, or
great

great Pain may be avoided by very slight Inconvenience; and then it should not be cunningly contrived, but openly requested: and if granted, accepted as a Favour, or the Refusal cheerfully acquiesced in.

But, in other Respects, how can we do Good? Follow as God's Providence leads, each in his Station, within his Bounds, and within his Capacity. Above all keep up Cheerfulness and good Humour. An Air of Dissatisfaction is doubly faulty. It belies your eternal Hopes, and disheartens all around you.—But Conversation is so empty, so useless.—Keep it peaceable and innocent, at least. Restrain Talkativeness in yourself, that you may think a little, how to introduce somewhat useful: but do not strive too much. Mere good Humour is *very* useful: it tunes the Mind. Do, in every Thing, the best you can: and trust in better Merits, that it shall be accepted. Look forward to the Conversation of Angels, and perfected Spirits: of those whom you have loved, and who have loved

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loved you amidst all your mutual Imperfections here. *There* will be nothing but Joy, and eternal Improvement. All joined in executing the divine Will, and dwelling on its Praises. No more Fear of Sorrow, or Parting: no more Doubts and Jealousies of yourself: no Anxieties for them: all fixed and secure. Of past Sorrows and Frailties will remain only the everlasting Gratitude of those who have been relieved, and forgiven. Each to other, in their due Degrees: all supremely, to their God, and Saviour!

ESSAY

E S S A Y XXV.

THIS is a Day I have Cause to bless. Let no gloomy Thought come near it. But can I keep out of my Mind, the Thought of such a Friend, as I so lately had? with a whole Train of Ideas attending that Thought? No; undoubtedly; but let me think of that Friend, and regulate those Ideas, as I ought. Let me, with humble, joyful Gratitude, consider, in how many excellent Beings I have the Interest of an affectionate and beloved Friend. Glories of the World! I look down upon you: My Happiness, my Boast are of a higher Kind.

These Friends are, at present, far separated from one another, but all happy: and, in a blessed Hereafter, I am permitted

ted humbly but joyfully to hope, that we shall all be eternally re-united. What mutual Gratulations, what tender Recollections must attend that Re-union! And oh, what unspeakable Gratitude and Adoration to Him, through whose blessed Redemption; that Bliss shall be attained, and this Mortal put on Immortality! The frail human Heart can hardly bear the Transport of the Thought! This Idea is too vast, and too bright.—Yet, it is not a fairy Vision, but a steadfast, eternal Truth.

Far away, then, all melancholy Apprehensions, of Death, of Pain, of Parting, mere Shadows every one! For what is Pain? An Hour of Trial, the Proof of our Faith, Patience and Fortitude.—What is Death? The Entrance upon our Reward, the End of our Dangers and Perplexities, the Point to which we have been tending from our Birth.—What is Parting? More bitter in itself than Death, because it leaves us destitute of our dearest Supports, in a State wherein we seem to need
 them

them most. This then, as the severest Pain, is the noblest Trial. And are we not sure that we are in the Hands of a merciful God, whose every Attribute is engaged to lay no more upon us, than our own Faith, and our own sincere Endeavours concurring, He will enable us to bear, to triumph over ?

We are born, into this World, poor helpless Creatures : but Parents, Friends, Protectors are provided to conduct us up to Maturity. An all-gracious Providence works by what Variety of Instruments it sees fit : but fit Instruments it never wants, and never can want. The Seeds of Good, and Evil grow up with us : at least, the Enemy sows his Tares so early, that they soon overtake the Grain. To root out the one, and to cherish the other, is the Business of Life. What is it, to us, by what Means, or by what Change of Hands, the Master of the Harvest vouchsafes to do this ? since our great Concern is only, that it be effectually done, and then, we are well

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well assured, that He “ will gather the
“ Wheat, into his Garner.”

He, who has given the former Rain in its Season, will not deny the latter Rain, also, to the diligent and pious Husbandman. Where a merciful Providence has remarkably blest the earlier Part of Life, the well-disposed Heart need not fear, that the later Years of it shall be left destitute. Every fit Support, and Guidance shall be provided : nay every Comfort and Delight, that contradicts not some still kinder Intention, or more important Aim.

Sufferings belong to human Nature. Of these, some Persons have a larger, some a lighter Share, and this indiscriminately, in some Measure, to Bad and Good. This Appointment is for wise Reasons, some of which, even our poor shallow Understandings can trace. But the Good are assured that they shall never want any necessary Support, under their Sufferings: and to know that they are liable to them, is one appointed

appointed Trial of their Faith, of their Submission. A true Christian knows, that all these Things shall finally work together for his good. Why then should he dread any of them?

But when these Sufferings are actually present, how must they be supported?—Cheerfully. To those who know, that all is, on the whole, well; every passing Day brings its Amusement and Relief: and let these be thankfully accepted. Those who are removed out of this World are happy: they are removed in God's good Time. Those, who are continued in it must rejoice in every Comfort, that attends their Continuance: must be thankful for every added Year. For, is not Life a Blessing? May not this added Time be improved to most excellent Purposes? Let this then be our Endeavour.

While continued in human Society, let us preserve a sociable, a friendly Spirit. Let our joyful affectionate Remembrance attend

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attend those, who are removed already into a higher Class of Beings. But let our active Love be exerted towards all our Fellow-Travellers : and let it be our Aim, so far as we are enabled, to lead many along with us towards those happy Mansions. This, at present, it seems, is the only Work we are fit for: and is it not a blessed one?

“ Be glad O ye Righteous, and rejoice
“ in the Lord, for a good and pleasant
“ Thing it is to be thankful !”

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E S S A Y XXVI.

AMUSEMENT is useful and laudable, not when it draws the Mind from religious Subjects (in this View the World uses it and is destroyed by it) but, when it takes the Thoughts from such Sorrows as are merely temporal, and imaginary, and so refits them for that better Employment, which, without this harmless Medium, they could not so soon or so well have resumed. The idle Mind flies Improvement as its Enemy, and seeks Amusement as its End. The Christian Heart has but one Home, one Joy, one Pursuit. But from this Home it is too often detained: from this Joy it is too often shut out: in this Pursuit it is, too often, hindered, by the Frailty of human Nature, the necessary Attentions and Engagements of Life,

Life, the Attachments of Affinity, and Friendship.

On this Side Eternity, Cares and Sorrows will be felt, in some Degree, by the Best : but the Christian, who knows that it is his absolute Duty to rejoice, and give Thanks, in every Thing, indulges not those gloomy Hours, nor wilfully harbours one melancholy Thought. Yet striving with such Thoughts, is only to be worse entangled in them. At such Times the good, and humble Mind, accepts thankfully the Assistance of the veriest Trifle, the most common and uninteresting Object, or Employment, that can dissipate the present Chain of vain and tiresome Thought : and this Chain once broken, it flies with recruited Vigour to its true Home, “as a Bird out of the Snare.”

By common and uninteresting Objects, I mean only to exclude all Indulgences of Fancy and Imagination, and such Amusements as seem interesting, because they

indeed sooth the Disposition, which we suppose ourselves flying from, as, for Example, melancholy Music, and poetically solemn Scenes. But, in a higher View, the least Flower of the Field, is a more interesting Object than the proudest Palace. For what Object can be small, or uninteresting, that is the Work and Gift of the Almighty! This Flower, or Insect, or Shell, would Aspasia say, is given to me, at this Instant, by ever present, ever watchful Goodness, to call off my Thoughts from their present vain Anxiety, or sinful Regret, to the thankful Contemplation of a gracious Creator, and Redeemer.—This Employment; this Company, that calls my present Attention from Subjects, it could wish to pursue, though it pursues them to its Hurt: this dull and unedifying Company, this dry and trifling Employment, is, in the Order of Providence, a kind Remedy, to unbend my Mind, and thereby restore its Strength. As such I will thankfully accept it, and cheerfully turn myself to it: for if I am absent in
Company,

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Company, I had better be alone; my Soul is equally wasting its Strength, in earnest Thought, and melancholy Recollection, and my Appearance discredits the Cause of Religion.

These are the Reasons, that make it a Duty to open the Mind to every innocent Pleasure: to the Admiration of every rural Object, to harmless Pleasantry and Mirth, to such a general Acquaintance with Arts and Sciences, Trades and Manufactures, Books and Men, as shall enable us to attend to, and to be amused, in some Degree, with every Scene, and with every Conversation. There is just the same Pride in resolving, that our Minds shall be always employed on the Stretch, as in imagining that our Reason is a competent Judge of all Subjects: human Frailty and Imperfection, alike forbids both. The Israelites gathered their Manna, from Day to Day: so should we our temporal Pleasures, and Comforts, and trust Him to provide for To-morrow,

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To-morrow, who supplied us Yesterday.
 When through Eagerness, and Fondness of
 Mind, we hoard up, by anxious Schemes
 and Wishes, a Portion for ourselves, it
 breeds but Corruption. Only in the Ark
 can it be laid up safe.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.